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No 408

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

BY ELEN E. HENFORD.

The bells are ringing, clear and sweet,
Beneath the adorning angel feet,
And in our hearts are glad thoughts born
By joyous bells of Christmas morn.
For in a manger, poor and low,
Was born the Christ-child, years ago,
And shepherds, on the hills afar,
Were told the tidings by a star.

Oh, ring, glad bells, ring loud and sweet,
The song which ages shall repeat,
Which angels sang on Christmas still,
Of Peace on Earth, to Men Good Will.

Oh, Christ-child, in a manger born,
The stars sang on thy birthday morn,
While, or did on thy mother's breast,
The wise men sought thy place of rest,
And peace descended on the earth,
In honor of thy holy birth,
Ah! thou hast died for us, and them
Who hailed thee king at Bethlehem.

Oh, ring, glad bells, ring loud and sweet,
The song which ages shall repeat,
Which angels sang on Christmas still,
Of Peace on Earth, to Men Good Will.

Oh, song, a-down the centuries rolled,
Oh, song, which never can grow old!
Oh, Christ-child, born a cross to bear
That we, at last, a crown might wear—
Let us, like shepherds, to thy feet
Bring love, as tribute-offering meet,
And worship thee, while angels sing
In praise of Jesus Christ, our king.

Oh, ring, glad bells, ring loud and sweet,
The song which ages shall repeat,
Which angels sang on Christmas still,
Of Peace on Earth, to Men Good Will.

Wife or Widow?

OR,

ETHELIND ERLE'S ENEMY.

BY RETT WINWOOD.

AUTHOR OF "A GIRL'S HEART," "A DANGEROUS WOMAN," "THE WRONGED HEIRESS," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST BRIDAL EVE.

"What do you think of marriage?
I take it as those that deny purgatory;
It locally contains a heaven or hell;
There's no third place in it."—WESLEY.

A MYSTICAL stir was in the house. Beautiful
exotics decorated hall and corridor, and flanked
the grand central staircase with bud, blossom
and arches of living green. The air seemed
heavy with the perfume of violets and helio-
tropes, and at the far end of the spacious draw-
ing-room hung the traditional marriage-bell,
pure, perfect and stainless as though fairy
fingers had fashioned and suspended it.

It was Ethelind Erle's wedding-eve. Glen-
oaks, the lovely country-seat of her guardian,
Colonel Philip Falkner, had been profusely de-
corated for the occasion. Most of the guests
were already in the house, making the scene
brilliant with their rich toilets and glittering
jewels.

The windows stood wide open, their hangings
of delicate lace swaying gently in the soft May
breeze that crept up from the placid bosom of
the bay. The moon stood trembling on the east-
ern horizon, as if eager yet half-afraid to pour
its pearl-white flood over the slumbering hills
and valleys and the waiting tide that washed
the amber sand below. Fair as a dream of Eden
was the scene.

Before a chivalrous glass in one of the upper cham-
bers stood Dolores Gloyne. She was to be bride-
maid, and wore the traditional white; but her
olive complexion and usually ruddy cheeks look-
ed quite ghastly in the brilliant light that per-
vaded the room. In her shaking fingers she held
a scented note.

"Come to me in the conservatory, Dolores," it
said. "You can steal away easily enough in the
crowd. I must see you alone, and this may be our
only opportunity." VINCENT.

The young girl crushed the note impatiently
in her hand. "I must go," she murmured. "Vincent might
do something reckless if I refused to see him. But it
is very wrong to meet him clandestinely after the promise
grandpapa extorted from me."

Catching up a shawl that lay on one of the
chairs, she flung it over her shoulders and stepped
to the door. There was noise and bustle
enough in the lower rooms, but the corridor
seemed deserted; and with a quick-drawn breath
she flitted down the broad passage.

Near the landing was a small alcove curtained
with crimson damask. Just as Dolores passed
this recess, an arm was suddenly thrust out from
the drapery, and she felt herself drawn forcibly
forward.

"Is it you, darling?" breathed a low, musical
voice.

Dolores drew back with a startled exclamation.

"Raymond—you here!" she uttered, glancing
into the dark, handsome face so close to her own.
"You frightened me dreadfully."

The hand fell from her arm.

"I beg your pardon, dear cousin," said the
young man, in a cold, changed voice. "These
halls are so confoundingly dark that I mistook
you for Ethelind. Why do you come stealing
upon one muffled up like that?"

"I have an errand down-stairs, and my white
dress seemed so conspicuous."

"Where did you leave Miss Erle?"

"She is still in her chamber, I suppose. Have
you any message for her?"

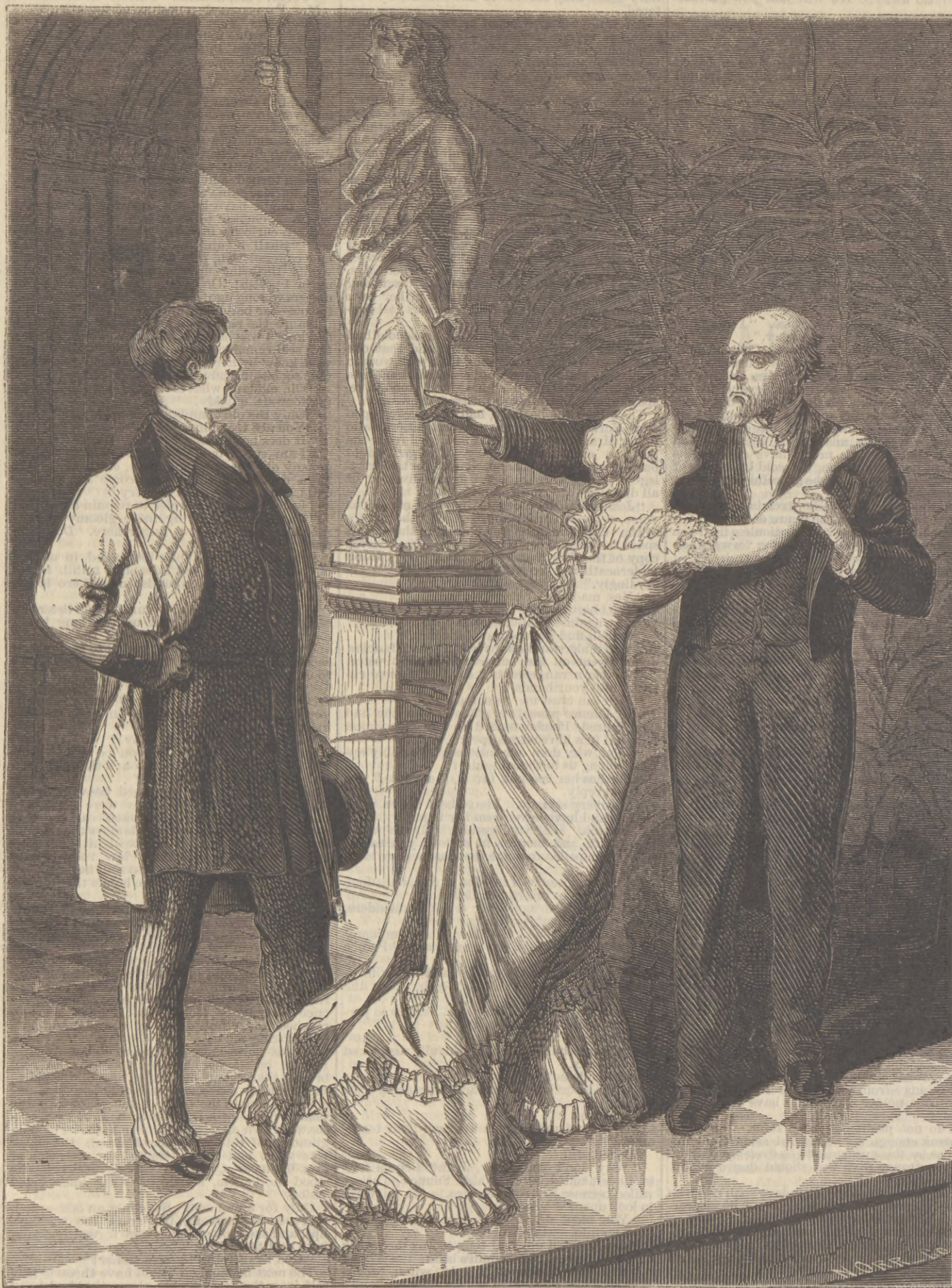
"Thank you—none. I can wait. Another
hour and she will be my wife. Then I shall have
no use for go-betweens."

There was so much exultation in his voice that
Dolores again lifted her eyes quickly. The face
into which she gazed was magnificent in its
beauty, and most women found it irresistibly
attractive. But a shiver of repulsion ran over the
girl. Raymond Challoner was her cousin—at
most her only living relative; nevertheless, she
did not altogether trust him.

"I hope you will make Ethelind a good hus-
band, Raymond," she said earnestly.

"Am I not an idolatrous lover?"

Dolores sighed.



"I was so miserable—so unhappy! I meant to say farewell, and then see him no more."

"These fierce, headstrong passions are not the
ones that endure longest, or that will suffer
most."

"I would die, if necessary, for my beautiful
bride. Is not that enough?"

A half-mocking smile curled his lips, and he
turned impatiently away. Dolores once more
gathered up her shawl, and ran swiftly on to
the back staircase. If she wished to see Vincent
Erle and return before the hour appointed for
the ceremony, there was no time to lose.

The shortest route to the conservatory lay
through the large dining-hall, where the wed-
ding-supper with its flowers, cut-glass and costly
plate was already laid out. The three or four
busy attendants scarcely noticed the muffled
figure that glided, ghost-like, down the long
avenue between the groaning tables, and disap-
peared in the cool green shadows beyond. Not
a single eye followed the girl with curiosity or
suspicion.

Dolores paused just within the conservatory,
and was straining her eyes through the per-
fumed obscurity of the place when a rustling
sound fell upon her ears, and a man emerged
from behind a trellis of the luxuriant bignonia.

"How long you were in coming, Dolores!" he
exclaimed, catching her in his arms.

She laid her cheek against his shoulder, and
answered with a repressed sob:

"Oh, Vincent! It was wrong for me to come
at all!"

"Wrong?"

"I promised grandpapa, before leaving home,
that I would avoid you. Now you have tempt-
ed me to break my word."

"It was cruel of him to extort such a promise
from me!" said the young man, indignantly.

"I know he has his best interests at heart.
Poor grandpapa! It seems base and ungrateful
to deceive him, when he has done so much for me."

A shade of disdain crossed Vincent Erle's
handsome face.

"You take too grave a view of the offense,"

Dolores, he said. "Egbert Challoner has no
right to interdict these meetings."

"Remember, he has been like a father to me."

"That is no reason why you should submit to
him like a slave. He knows that we love each
other devotedly, and yet he has forbidden me
the house, and commanded you not to see me.
And why? Simply because I am poor, and
therefore not an eligible suitor for your hand.
It is shameful!"

"Hush!" whispered Dolores, in a shivering
voice. "Try to bear with him for my sake."

"I have borne too long already."

"Don't speak like that. It pains me to hear
you. But it is not prudent to linger here. Tell
me why you sent for me, Vincent, that I may
return to my own room."

"I believe you are anxious to be rid of me!"

"Oh, no, no. But you know as well as I do
the risk we run in coming here."

There was a moment's silence, and the young
man drew her still more closely to his side.

"There must be an end of this," he said, in a
low voice that was scarcely audible. "We seem
no nearer the consummation of our happiness
than we were twelve months ago. I have made
up my mind. When this wedding is once over,
I shall go to old Mr. Challoner, and make a clean
breast of everything."

Dolores threw up her hands, a look of real
terror on her face.

"Oh, Vincent! my heart misgives me. Pro-
mise me that you will do nothing rash. My
grandpapa might curse me in his anger, and
that I could not bear. Wait—be patient a little
longer."

Her breath caught in hysterical sobs,
and she would have laid her face on his shoulder
had he not suddenly pushed her from him.

"Compose yourself," he whispered. "I am
certain I heard footsteps."

Dolores clung faint and trembling to the
trellis. After a moment of intense suspense,
her worst fears were realized. Forth from the

thick shadows thrown by two large stands of
blossoming plants, stepped the bent figure of a
haughty old man.

"Grandpapa!" she gasped.

Mr. Egbert Challoner, for it was he, confronted
her, his face crimson with rage.

"You vexen!" he hissed. "How dared you
disobey me! How dared you meet this fellow
in opposition to my wishes?"

She sprang forward and clung to his arm, her
tears falling fast.

"Do not be angry with me, dear grandpapa!"
she pleaded. "I was so miserable—so unhappy!"

How could I keep my word with Vincent and
my own heart tempting me to break it! I meant
to say farewell, and then see him no more."

Rudely repulsing her, Mr. Challoner turned
to Vincent Erle.

"What excuse have you to offer for your dis-
honorable conduct?" he haughtily demanded.

"None," was the cold response. "I have done
nothing that I should not do over again, under
like provocation. Let your displeasure be visit-
ed upon me alone—that is all I ask. It was I
who tempted Dolores to deceive you."

Mr. Challoner gazed steadfastly at the young
man, without speaking, for several seconds.

Then, contemptuously turning his back on him,
he grasped the hand of his granddaughter, led
her back into the dining-hall, and carefully
closed the door.

"I am surprised that you should betray the
trust I reposed in you, Dolores," he said, sternly.

"To avoid remark, I consented that you
should come to Glenoaks and assist at the wed-
ding of your cousin Raymond. Knowing, as
you do, in what disfavor I hold Vincent Erle, it
is strange that you should take a base advantage
of the situation."

"I know it was very wrong—oh, forgive me."

"You do not deserve to be pardoned."

"I know it. But—but—my heart is broken."

Her head drooped, and she again broke into
irrepressible sobs. Mr. Challoner stood looking
at her in sorrowful silence. At length she grew

more composed, and leaning a little toward him,
said in an eager whisper:

"I wish you would tell me why you are so
bitterly opposed to Vincent. You never assign-
ed any good and sufficient reason for the dislike
you profess to feel."

"He is not a suitable match for you."

"Because of his poverty?"

"That is one of the reasons."

"You did not oppose Raymond's marriage
with Vincent's sister, Ethelind."

"True."

The girl's lip took a scornful curve.

"I think I understand the real nature of the
distinction you would make," she said, almost
bitterly. "Ethelind was fortunate enough to
fall heir to her mother's fortune, while poor
Vincent has nothing. It is merely a question of
bonds, bank stock and dividends."

"Nay, child, you are mistaken. Ethelind is a
noble young woman—even the proudest fam-
ily might feel honored to welcome her to its cir-
cle. Vincent, unfortunately, does not resemble
her in character or disposition."

The girl's face suddenly became white and
drawn as if with pain.

"What do you mean?" she gasped.

"Simply this, that I have no confidence in
the man, or in his professions. Let that suffice.
We will speak of him no more. You must give
him up. I shall not brook a second act of dis-
obedience."

Turning as he spoke, he left her without an-
other word. Dolores stood for some moments
like one stunned. She turned giddily from the
sight of glittering plate and snowy damask of
the wedding banquet as if it had sickened her.
At length she groped her way up the deserted
staircase, murmuring with livid lips:

"Ah, how little does my grandfather guess of
the shameful truth! And, God help me! how
can I ever tell him! I am too miserable to live!
Dear, dear Vincent! I cannot think evil of you
—I will not! It would kill me. May God keep
you true to me—true to yourself!"

CHAPTER II.

THE UNWILLING SUPPLIANT.

"Is there within thy heart a need
That mine can not fulfill?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now, lest at some future day
My whole life wither and decay."

—MISS PROCTOR.

DOLORES had scarcely regained the shelter of
her own room, and thrown aside her heavy shawl,
when slow, dragging steps descended the corri-
dor. Looking up expectantly as the door swung
open, she saw the bride-elect, Ethelind Erle,
totter across the threshold.

"Oh, my poor friend! What brings you
here?"

Dolores started impulsively forward as she as-
ked the question. Whiter than her bridal-robes,
Ethelind stood before her, her fair oval face
twinkled with pain, and her eyes, so like violets
in calmer moods, looking straight forward in a
dreary stare absolutely appalling.

"Hide me!" the poor creature cried at length,
imploringly. "Dolores, you are my only friend.
Lock and double-lock the door. I want no one
but you."

Dolores shoved the bolt into its socket; then,
returning, she gently took Ethelind's hand and
drew her to a seat.

"What has happened?" she said, compassion-
ately. "Tell me all about it!"

"I want to get away—away from him!" cried
Ethelind, wildly. "I—I—hate him. 'Tis of no
use struggling against the feeling. It grows
more and more intense. I believe I am mad to-
night. My head is burning. Oh, Dolores, pity
me!"

"I do pity you," was the gentle answer. "Is
this marriage so extremely distasteful to you?"

"I would rather die than become Raymond
Challoner's wife."

Dolores sighed, and a heavy weight settled
upon her heart. She had long suspected that
Raymond did not possess all the love of the
bride he had chosen, but this active, intense re-
pugnance shocked and surprised her.

"Oh, why did you not speak of this before it
was too late?" she exclaimed.

Ethelind dropped her eyes and shuddered.

"I feel like one just waking from a dream.
I never fully realized what I had done until to-
night when I roused up to find myself arrayed
in these hateful robes. Oh, if they were only my
shroud it would not matter!"

"It is wicked to say such things, Ethelind."

"Is it? I do not know. In the grave there is
peace and rest. Oh, if I were only there!"

She started to her feet, and began to march
restlessly up and down the room, her hands
clapped tightly on her bosom. Like the ghost
of a bride she looked with her ghastly face—in
which the only spots of color were the violet-
blue of her eyes—and her trailing satin robe over
which fell, uncared for, the fleecy folds of the
bridal veil.

At length she paused before a Japanese cabi-
net that stood in one corner of the room. She
remained there motionless so long that Dolores,
softly following her, saw that her eyes were fixed
upon a small dagger of fore gn workmanship
that reposed on one of the shelves.

"Better death than a life of misery," muttered
the half-crazed creature. "God is merciful
—he knows my temptation and despair—he will
forgive me."

With a frenzied laugh she seized the dagger,
and in another moment would have buried it
in her bosom had not Dolores arrested the up-
lifted arm.

"My God, Ethelind, what would you do?"

"Let me alone! Why did you seek to hinder
me?"

"My poor friend, do you not know that self-
destruction is the one sin that Heaven itself can
not pardon?"

A distressing wail broke from Ethelind's lips,
her limbs trembled, and she sunk down on the
floor as if strength had suddenly deserted her.

"I told you I was mad."

"I believe, on my soul, you are. Come, let
me remove your wretch and veil and you shall
lie down on my bed until you are more com-
posed."

Ethelind fiercely pushed away the hands
that would have performed these friendly of-
fices.

"Let my veil remain. It is altogether fitting

They all have business outside; going away in the mornin' an' not comin' back till night. No, I told Mr. Richard I'd take you, the short time you was goin' to stay in the city, but I wouldn't make a practice out of it for no money. Not that I'd mind it so much if they was all as nice an' quiet as you be. But the majority on 'em ain't, not by no manner of means. I had enough of that sort of thing when my poor dead-and-gone husband was 'live. When a body has got to my age, and worked hard all their life, they want a little rest an' quiet."

Hannah paused a moment, but only to take breath.

"Your breakfast will be ready in five minutes. I didn't make the coffee, because I wanted it to be fresh. Here's the morning's paper, with all about that dreadful accident in it. Curious enough, they've your name in the list of the killed. I told Mr. Richard that he orter have it corrected, but he said as how 'twan't no manner of use; them posky newspaper men was so pig-headed an' contra'y that they never would own they was mistaken 'bout anything. Very unaccommodating of 'em, to say the least."

Irva shivered as her eye fell upon the name of the ill-fated lady, in whose place she had so mysteriously stepped. What a terrible fate for one so young! Yet it was a question if she were not the most fortunate of the two.

Her grave look was not unnoticed by Hannah.

"You've had a very fortunate escape, Miss Lane."

"I have, indeed!" echoed Irva, who had more cause for gratitude than Hannah supposed.

While she was thus speaking, Hannah was summoned up-stairs by the ringing of the door-bell, returning in a few minutes.

As soon as Irva rose from the table, she said:

"Mr. Richard is up-stairs, in the parlor, waiting to see you."

Hannah noticed the agitation that Irva vainly strove to subdue, with some surprise, though ascribing it to the shock her nervous system had received.

"He ain't in no hurry. I told him that you was at breakfast; an' he insisted that I shouldn't tell you till you had finished."

Had Irva been a royal princess, Richard could not have bowed over the hand she extended to him with an air of more respect. He saw the doubts and misgivings so plainly visible in her constrained manner and varying color, and hastened to reassure her.

Leading her to the sofa, he wheeled an easy-chair in front of her, and sat down; a proceeding that served to still her fluttering nerves and put her more at ease than anything he could have said.

Irva remembered what he said to her on the night of their first meeting. "You can trust me. I am an honorable man," and as she looked into those honest blue eyes, she felt that he spoke truly.

In order to invite her confidence, Richard told her all about himself. How he was an orphan, whose nearest relatives were two sisters, one a half-sister, several years older than himself.

He told her about Hannah, who had lived with his mother until her marriage; relating various anecdotes illustrative of her kindness of heart and good common sense; displaying such a fund of kindly and honorable feeling himself, that before she was aware of it, Irva was talking to him as freely as if she had known him all her life.

Richard suddenly checked the tide of his reminiscences.

"Now, let me hear a little about you. To commence at the beginning, how are you feeling?"

Irva's cheeks flushed.

"Very much as if I were a ship, sailing under false colors."

"Ah! well; we'll fix that all right."

Then catching the questioning look in the shy eyes that were lifted to his, he added, with a laugh:

"Miss Irva—you told me that was your name, I think—you look at me as if I was an ogre. Now, in spite of my six feet of stature, and ferocious appearance, I guarantee to assure you that I am a most harmless fellow."

"I don't think you the least bit of an ogre," smiled Irva. "On the contrary, I find it impossible to express my appreciation of your generous and noble conduct."

Richard's face lighted up at this praise, which sounded very sweet to him.

"Show it by trusting me a little."

Richard looked at the face, whose varying color showed the conflict that was going on.

"Don't think that I want to pry into anything that you wish to conceal. Only if there is anything that you would like to tell me, I pledge myself to regard it as a most sacred confidence; giving you all the counsel and assistance in my power."

It was some moments before Irva spoke, and when she did, it was slowly and with hesitation.

"I have little to tell, and that little is not pleasant to speak of, or remember. I am a worse than orphan; my mother died when I was a baby—my father I never saw. I was called by the name of the woman who brought me up, but to which I have no just claim. I dare not bear that name any longer, because I have an enemy, a bad and cruel man, from whom I wish to escape. Pray do not think me ungrateful, but I cannot, dare not tell you more!"

"You need not; I will not ask you another question. I said what I did, hoping that I might be able to serve you."

"The only way by which you can do that is to obtain me some kind of employment."

Richard glanced from the small hands to the face, which, with all its delicacy of outline, had a certain air of steadiness and resolution.

"Have you ever taught any?"

"No; but I think I could, if the pupils were not too far advanced."

Richard was silent, and Irva continued:

"If you knew of any place, I should be so glad. I would be content with very small salary."

"A stranger would find it next to an impossibility, without credentials."

Irva's countenance fell.

"The place with my sister, that Miss Lane, poor thing, was to fill, is now vacant, and would just suit you."

"Would she take me without references?"

Richard knew what a careful mother his sister was.

"Could she have an opportunity of knowing you, she would trust you I am sure. Supposing you go and make a trial of it. My sister has never seen Miss Lane, and I know nothing of her death."

"Without letting her know who I am—I would that be right?"

"I don't think it would be wrong—under the circumstances. I don't mean, of course, to continue the supposition, but only for a few weeks, until you have had time to win her confidence, as you will be sure to do. You can then tell her how it is. Or, if you would rather not do so, I will look around, in the meantime, and find you some other opening. There is no possible chance for detection, as the lady whose name and place you take had no relatives except a younger brother, who was adopted by a man out West. As for wronging my sister in any way, I secure for her children a good governess, and that is all she requires. You will not find your duties hard or irksome. My sister is a thorough lady, in every sense of the word, and will do everything to make her home pleasant to you. There are only three children, the oldest not ten yet, very quiet and well-behaved."

"I have no doubt of its being a desirable place, and no fears that my duties will be too hard."

"Then leave the rest to me," interrupted Richard, gayly. "My shoulders are broad enough to take all the responsibility. If any body is blamed, I will take special pains to see that it falls on the right party."

"Now, my dear Miss Lane—that is your name now, you know—I want you to consider me the big brother who had forgotten you had, and who would only be too happy to be of service to you."

The tears sprang to Irva's eyes.

"I wish you were!"

The honest fellow's face flushed at the strong protest his heart uttered against this wish.

"As children say, 'let us make believe' that it is so. And in that relation, permit me to remark, as it was the intention of Miss Lane, that was, to do some shopping in the city, perhaps Miss Lane, that is, would like to do some, also. In that case, I hope she will allow me to be her banker; with the proviso, however, that she repay me when her first quarter is due."

Irva felt the thoughtfulness and delicacy of these words.

"I think I have a way of obtaining all I shall need. To show my appreciation of our kindness, I promise, in case I am mistaken, I will let you know."

"Now remember. In the meantime, I will write to my sister; mentioning the accident, and the delay it has occasioned, and making everything clear and straight for you."

The resource to which Irva alluded was the chain, from which was suspended the locket containing her mother's picture.

On returning to her room she examined it. It was heavy and of solid gold, and must have cost considerable in the day of it.

The jeweler to whom she applied offered her twenty-five dollars, less than half its worth; but it was more than Irva expected, and it was very gladly accepted.

On her return she found a trunk in her room, on which were the initials of her new name.

In the bonnet-box was a brown straw hat, trimmed with velvet of the same color, and a long, drooping feather; much handsomer than she would have thought of buying.

In another part of it were gloves, handkerchief and various other articles of feminine apparel.

Irva knew, in a moment, who they were from, but when Richard came in the evening, and she taxed him with it, half-reproachfully, he made strange of the whole affair, declaring it to be a mystery too deep for him to fathom.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHAT HANNAH THOUGHT ABOUT IT.

It was finally settled that Irva should wait a week longer than the time at first decided upon, so that Richard could accompany her.

"I want to see sister Kate and the babies," he said. "And then it will be better, taking everything into consideration, that I should go with you."

Richard often took tea at Hannah's during this interval, and was invariably there every evening.

He always had some ostensible errand.

"I only ran in for a minute," he would say, laughingly.

But Hannah noticed that his minutes were remarkably long ones, stretching themselves into an hour, at the shortest.

She was very shrewd and sharp-sighted, and began to feel a little uneasy at two young people, each so formed as to please and attract the other, yet so different in position, being thrown so much together.

She always used a great deal of freedom in speaking to Richard, treating him very much as she did when he was boy, and which, as it amused him, he had encouraged.

One night she followed him out onto the steps.

"You were always fond of me, Mr. Richard," she said, dryly; "but there never was a time before that you couldn't exist without seeing me twice in twenty-four hours!"

Richard colored.

"What foolish notion have you got into your head, now?" he laughed.

"Mind that you don't get foolish notions into somebody else's head."

"What do you mean?"

Hannah looked up into the big blue eyes, which had the same honest look that they had when he was a boy.

"I know that you wouldn't do nothin' wrong, Mr. Richard, not if you knowed it; but young men is so thoughtless. Miss Lane is a nice little body; I never look so to any one before on such close acquaintance. An' she's pretty, there ain't no denyin' that. An' I'm glad to see you kind to her. You orter be kind to all such; help in them all you can, in their own life an' way. But you an' she can't never be more to each other than you be now. An' I ain't no real kind-ness for a man in your position to pay a girl in hers too much attention."

Richard listened to this with a visible impatience, that almost amounted to anger.

"What nonsense! Hannah. To hear you and my sisters talk, one would suppose you'd been to the blood-royal, instead of being an American-born citizen, penniless, but for the bounty of my uncle, who may leave his property to some one else, as he has a perfect right to do. Miss Lane is my equal, in every respect, and the man will be fortunate that wins her."

"What foolish notion have you got into your head, now?" he laughed.

"Mind that you don't get foolish notions into somebody else's head."

"What do you mean?"

Hannah looked up into the big blue eyes, which had the same honest look that they had when he was a boy.

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noticin', an' I couldn't see nothin' more'n comin'. He treats her as if she was a queen, an' she ain't the least mite forrerd, I'll say that fur her!"

Irva's simple preparations were soon made. She got herself a brown traveling-suit, just the shade of her hat, with gloves to match, in which she looked very nicely.

Richard glanced approvingly at her costume, as he entered the room where she sat waiting for him.

There was not a bit of color about her except in her cheeks, and these were as bright as the bunch of roses he handed her.

"I think you'll be off directly, as we have only just time to catch the boat."

There were actually tears in Hannah's eyes as she followed them to the door.

"I declare, I shall be lonesome enough now!" she said, as Irva bid her good-by.

"I am really getting jealous of Miss Lane," laughed Richard; "you never put such a long face as that on whenever I went away!"

"Be sure you come an' see me whenever you come to the city!" called out Hannah, as they went down the steps.

"Of course she'll come," said Richard, looking back; "I shall bring her myself."

"What a nice-lookin' couple they be!" thought Hannah, as she looked after them. "It almost seems as if they was made for each other. But, lawful sakes, his uncle would never consent in the world, an' as far as Miss Lane an' Miss Kate, they'd go distracted at the very thought of it."

In less than half an hour Richard and Irva were steaming up the Hudson.

It was a beautiful day, and they remained most of the time on deck. It was the first trip Richard had had up the river, and everything was new and delightful.

With Richard, it had lost the charm of novelty, but he took great pleasure in pointing out to Irva the beautiful residences and places of note by which they passed. Indeed, he felt that it was, by far, the pleasantest trip he had ever taken, ending all his wanderings.

"We are nearly home now," he said, with a half-sigh; "it seems as if we had come in half the usual time."

Yonder is Forest Hill," he added, pointing to a house perched upon a rocky eminence far above their heads. "We have to pass it to get to the landing."

It was likely to be her home for some months, at least, and Irva surveyed it with no little interest.

It looked very solitary, with no habitation anywhere near it.

Perhaps this thought was visible in Irva's countenance, for Richard said:

"You cannot tell much about it from the river. On the other side the ascent is so gradual about very beautiful. My sister spends most of her time there, on account of the children. But coming from the city, I fear, at first, it will seem rather lonely to you."

"I do not like the city, and am very, very glad to leave it."

As Richard looked at the speaker he remembered what she had told him.

Who could be an enemy of one so gentle and good?

They had now touched the dock.

Boat and low, open carriage stood a colored boy, his glistening teeth very apparent in the smile that broadened his face.

"There is Jack waiting for us," said Richard. "This way, Miss Lane."

"How do you do, Jack! All well at the house?"

"All very well, I thanks you, Mr. Richard," responded Jack, with a low bow.

Richard assisted Irva in, taking the reins into his own hands.

"I'll drive, Jack; you can ride back on the express."

"All right. I've got to stop for the mail, anyhow. They told me to come for the young lady, but they didn't nobody say as how you was comin', Mr. Richard."

There were didn't any one know it. I thought I'd take them to the city."

Richard had spoken truly; the scenery which lay on each side of the winding road that led to Forest Hill was very beautiful, and a calm, restful feeling came over Irva as she looked around.

"I like it," said Richard, who had been quietly watching her.

"Yes. I have spent most of my time in the country; and it seems like getting home."

"I knew it," thought Richard, his mind beginning to be lost in a sea of conjectures as to how, and by what means, she had come to the world, so sheltered position under the lee of a huge boulder. He uttered a feeble jest at their poor accommodations, but few words were spoken. At any moment the bloodthirsty savages might stumble across their covert.

Amos stripped the saddles and bridles from the two horses, and then, aided by the sense of touch rather than sight, tethered them in a spot where the bare earth would not give loud echo to their tramping hoofs.

Returning with the saddle-blankets to where May Chapin crouched, he knelt down and wrapped them around her feet and shoulders. Already she was shivering in the biting north-east wind, and the frozen earth was an ungrateful couch.

In low whispers he sought to cheer her downcast spirits, but dearly as she loved the sound of his voice, May, in dread lest the prowling human wolves should be nigh, begged his silence.

Together they crouched beneath the rock, and comforted by the pressure of her lover's arms, May yielded to the drowsiness caused by fatigue and slept. And, despite his resolution to the contrary, an hour later Amos followed her example.

The two horses snorted and pawed the ground uneasily, but the lovers slept on, not even to their dreams imagining the fearful peril that was closing in upon them. The heavens above assumed a lurid shade that momentarily increased in extent and brightness. There was a faint, dull roaring that gradually rose above the howling of the wind. And now the icy breath became tempered by a spicy, pungent warmth. Bright sparks flashed across the darkened hollow, and one, as though guided by some friendly breath, settled down upon the upturned face of the sleeping man.

With



NEW YORK, JANUARY 5, 1878.

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THE STAR SERIALS!

BY

Albert W. Aiken

Corinne Cushman

Oil Coomes

Joseph E. Badger, Jr.

all in hand, and to rapidly succeed one another, are each brilliant and specially fine works by these master pens of American Fiction Literature.

Sunshine Papers.

Baby Shows.

BABY shows are just the rage. County fairs have them, then New York has one, then Philadelphia must have one, and next Brooklyn follows suit, and so the fashion spreads, as all idiotic fashions do spread, like "wild-fire."

And babies lean and babies fat, babies tall and babies short, babies ugly and babies handsome, babies good-natured and babies vicious, babies with teeth and babies without, babies who cry and babies who laugh, babies in single, double, treble and quadruple groups, and the handsome mothers of all the maternal authors of these little beings are exhibited for the benefit of a curious and idle public, eagerly seeking after anything new, extravagant, bizarre, ugly or distasteful; and for all this notoriety, the babies and mother who excel in their specialty take a prize! And this prize, offered to the

"handsomest mother," is, I am inclined to believe, a greater incentive for these females to exhibit the charms of their respective offspring to an admiring public, than any hope that their particular infant, or infants, will be preferred above others. A woman may, possibly, doubt that her child is the handsomest child that ever was born, but she never doubts concerning her own good looks. And when the "handsomest mother" receives her prize, every other woman who presented herself as a candidate for it, will wonder how it was that she was not chosen.

But, it is not necessary to waste money upon baby shows, even though one has no scruples about countenancing their debasement of humanity to a level with dogs, cats, cattle, poultry and other lower orders of animals; one can see baby shows at all times, and in all places, free of charge.

Do you travel by rail or by steamship, by ferry-boat or horse-car, you are sure to see a baby show on your journey; and are a thrice-happy mortal if you see not a dozen. There will be several distributed around the car, or occupying the steamer berths next yours, who will smile, and frown, and suck their thumbs, and soil their bibs, and smear themselves and every one who comes near them with fruit, cakes, or candy, and crow, and wail, and chatter, and romp, until you will pliously wish them all in the bottom of—Well, anywhere but near you! On the ferry-boat there is the obstreperous infant who insists on jumping, and climbing, and running, and banging, and screaming, and communicating family secrets or remarkable wishes to every individual whom he can martyrize into a listener; and upon the horse-cars are the nurses with babies, and the mothers with babies, and the fathers with babies, all of whom must have seats. (And did you ever notice how a woman will get into a car, and until she obtains the desired seat tenderly cling to a big child that can walk and stand quite unaided at any other time?) And the babies slide upon the car floor and trip up unfortunate women who are hurrying to get out before they are carried more than two blocks beyond where they want to go, or climb upon the cushions, jamming in a gentleman's hat or knocking off his eye-glasses, or sit crosswise on their parents' knees, wiping their muddy small feet upon the next passenger's silk dress, or cry, or try to swallow their mittens, or disgorge their dinner, or perpetrate some other equally amusing, interesting, impish, or disgusting trick for the benefit of their elder companions.

Do you call upon a friend, one cherub opens the door; another displays his heels through the balustrade; a third, whose lips and hands disseminate a suspicious odor of bread and butter, follows mamma into the parlor, and when told to kiss you seizes your new gown with those odorous (you smell it odious) hands, leaving thereon two greasy marks; and you are conveyed up-stairs, by the dotting mother, to see the fourth, who is asleep, and must not be awakened, but is so superior to any other baby in existence that you cannot think of leaving the house without seeing it.

You go home wondering why people cannot bring up their children better, and find that your May has been eating cake in the parlors, leaving the crumbs all about on the satin furniture, and that Tom is paddling with his dress on in the bath-tub.

Talk of baby shows! Show me the happy mortal who has seen so few of them that he enjoys paying twenty-five cents to look upon several scores of the little—abominable darlings, and I would consider it great bliss to introduce him for a week's stay, night and day, in a family blessed with several small children.

Unless he was a saint, what wicked words he would want to use before he escaped their torments. Such impudence, rudeness, rudeness, noisiness, shouting, quarreling, crying, mischief-doing, impishness, dirtiness! What would he do with the lady in long clothes when asked to hold it? Goodness only knows, for the fathers of such mysteries rarely ever acquire that art to any amount of facility! Probably he would gather it up by the skirts, and let it flop down just where it ought to be supported; and when it cried, instead of deftly rushing for warm water, and condensed milk, and an "Alexandria" bottle, he would throw it up to the ceiling, halloo at it, puff his cigar-smoke in its face, or do anything barbarous that would cause it to cry louder; and when such treatment precipitated the poor infant into an attack of nausea, would that man ever wear again the coat he wore then, or venture to meddle in future with babies! As for the next sized baby, old enough to toddle about the floor, and swallow pins, and tumble into water-jars, and pull over small tables, and the covers and other articles off of large ones, would the man want to attend baby shows, think you, after an experience with it?

Let those who wish to go to baby shows; but economical people will be contented, we think, with the shows they can get nearer home. As for us, the only baby shows we indorse are ones where the babies are profoundly wrapped in slumber; notwithstanding the beauty of "Wide Awake," we immensely prefer "Fast Asleep."

N. B.—I shall not be "in" to any of my married friends for a month or so after this article appears; and I shall give strict orders that the editor of the JOURNAL shall not send my address to any "inquiring friends."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

SOME "LAWLESS" MAXIMS.

Don't quarrel with your bread-and-butter but be thankful that you have it; if you cannot afford to have the butter be thankful for the bread. If you cannot obtain as much salary as you deem yourselves worthy, take less, but don't make your work less worthy of praise on that account. A small salary that is certain is much better than the promise of one that is uncertain. When you gain a good situation strive to keep it, which you can do by faithfulness and integrity. Remember, if you are a good workman, you will make a good master. He commands best who knows how to obey. Let petty annoyances slide; they're soon over, like a summer shower, and you'll feel all the better for letting them alone. Every person has his temper, and some cannot keep it in subjection as well as others. Don't be hasty in leaving a good place.

* Not far from where I am staying a young lad was employed at a good price, had good accommodations, enough to eat and wear, and the promise that—if he stayed with his employer until he was of age—he should receive a present of one hundred dollars. But the master was quick-tempered and said hasty words that meant but little and were soon done with; but the lad, taking them to heart, was hasty, too, and left his employer. Now he drifts from place to place. Ah, Willie, I fear you have made a mistake, and when you become of age, and think what a good start in life that hundred dollars would give you, you will think then as I do now.

We must all have scoldings some time or other, but we have to bear them, and I don't know but we are made better for bearing them cheerfully.

Have courage and be hopeful. If days are dark and "times hard," look forward to brighter and better ones; this will inspire you to push on; but, if you don't look forward, you not only clog your own way but stop the passage for others. A great many persons in reading of those who have amassed wealth by an honest and upright course, wish they had their fortunes, but how few think of their integrity!

Poverty doesn't shut so many doors to a person as is supposed. The expression—"poor, but honest" should be dropped. Just as though it was a singular thing for a poor person to be honest! I know of several worthy people, who would sooner cut their right hand off than do a dishonest action, and they are poor. I had as lief trust to their word as I would to that of a millionaire, and I know I had as willingly place my funds in their keeping as I would in that of the safest bank in America.

If you are in the wrong, be generous enough to acknowledge it, and don't, on any account, strive to work your way out of it by prevarication, for that is mean and wicked, and adds more to the fault. A straightforward course is the safest and surest. No one will think less of you for being willing to acknowledge you are in error; but, if a person discovers you have falsified your way out of it, you will receive naught but contempt.

Treat all with whom you have dealings alike; don't fawn upon the rich on account of their wealth, and don't speak sharply to the poor on account of their poverty.

Do not be too ambitious to make a great show in the world; be enough for that when you can afford it. Don't be too desirous to have your name carved in massive marble over some great institution. Engrave it first in the hearts of your neighbors by good deeds and many actions.

Don't grow discouraged and despondent. Impediments beset many paths but they must be put aside and you must work bravely on. If your first, second or even third efforts prove failures, have confidence enough in yourself to hope that the fourth will be a success.

Do not waste too many words, or too much time, in telling what you intend to do, but go and do it at once, or others will be before you and make use of your ideas before you have the chance, and that is one good reason why it is best to keep one's business to oneself.

Do not be afraid to advertise your business after you are started in trade. Let the people know what you have for sale and your customers will arrive. Pay no heed to those who tell you that advertising is humbug, for they are often humbugs or stupid, themselves.

Let your wife know the state of your pecuniary affairs, and, take my word for it, she will be the first one to economize when she sees there is a necessity for her doing so.

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

My New Play.

My new play has had an extensive run. It is entitled "The Last Rose of Summer; or, Cabbages for Four."

With my troupe I have played it in every State in the Union, and expect to produce it in the balance soon.

Wherever we have played it they have manifested a desire—through constables, etc.—for us to remain.

It is one of the most thrilling plays that was ever produced on any stage, not excepting the road-agents' plays on the Black Hills stages, for we take your money without persuasive revolvers.

Everybody has attended this performance, including the rest of the people, and most of the neighbors.

We are about to start out on our regular winter tour, and as we expect to walk into your town soon (whether we have to walk out or not) I beg to append a few notices of the play, clipped from papers throughout the country, which received no pay for the same—we assure you. We hope you will read them with tears in your spectacles, and money in your pockets.

"During the performance of this renowned play last night the whole audience sat in tiers—one above another."—*Detroit Free Press.*

"This play was so affecting in some parts that the whole audience melted—away, and there was not one left."—*Danbury News.*

"The audience was pretty full last night, and the author of the play was repeatedly cheered, but his modesty prevented him from showing himself."—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

"The play was frequently en-apple-cored last night."—*Troy Times.*

"This play was so exciting last night that it fired the audience, but they went out themselves without calling out the fire department."—*Albany Argus.*

"Thronged of people could not get into the hall last night—because there was no money among them."—*Buffalo Express.*

"The piece was excellently played before it was half out."—*Brooklyn Times.*

"This play is vastly more popular than baseball or seven-up."—*Baltimore Gazette.*

"They held the audience for two long hours—by locking the doors."—*Richmond Whig.*

"This troupe played to the biggest (feeling) audience ever assembled in this town."—*Albany Times.*

"One of the most exciting scenes was the hanging of the hero, but the curtain dropped fifteen minutes too soon."—*Philadelphia Express.*

"The audience stayed until it was out—we mean the audience."—*Oil City Express.*

"A great many evinced a desire to stay all night, but they were waked up and put out."—*Cincinnati Commercial.*

"This performance in the Opera House was received last night with a perfect few-roe."—*Covington Times.*

"This play produced last night brought down the house—from up-stairs."—*Louisville Courier.*

"This play was acted last night at the Opera House. It was thought that somebody hallowed 'fire,' but it was afterward ascertained to be a mistake."—*Terre Haute Times.*

"This play was as moving as the first of May."—*Brooklyn Times.*

"There was a terrible rush last night at the Music Hall—in getting out."—*Troy Whig.*

"People with complimentary tickets say this is the best performance in the world."—*Pondunk Transcript.*

"This is the sleekest company on the boards."—*Country Landlord.*

"They played in a very good house last night, but did not have a very large haul."—*Springfield Republican.*

"The Opera House last night was entirely filled—with their voices."—*Providence Journal.*

"The performance last night was as good as could be, and none of our citizens were absent, who were present."—*Hartford Courant.*

"Our people were affected to tears—because they were there."—*Bangor Post.*

"The ticket-agent, who skipped, said it was one of the best paying institutions in the world."—*Washington Chronicle.*

"This is one of the greatest plays that ever took place in this place."—*Indianapolis Journal.*

"Everybody took it; it is better than Vinegar Bitters, Soothing Syrup, or Pills."—*Chicago Times.*

"It was hinted that the feet of the actors were not real, but we are assured that they were."—*York Citizen.*

"No one, except those who had not new bonnets, regrets they were there."—*Lexington Gazette.*

"It was one of the latest things out, last night."—*Memphis Whig.*

"The exit of the actors elicited great applause."—*New Orleans Times.*

"The tender middle act of the play dissolved the audience, and they immediately ran down stairs."—*Vicksburg Whig.*

"The audience warmed up greatly as the play went on—as the janitor kept putting more wood in the stove."—*St. Louis Democrat.*

"The audience last night was very compact; there were twelve persons in twelve seats."—*Quincy Herald.*

"The audience was very recherche last Saturday night—that is, they went to church the next day, and gave nothing."—*St. Joseph Herald.*

"The smaller the audience the better this troupe plays, it seems."—*Hannibal Times.*

"This troupe had a very good house in this city, last night. It cost eighty thousand dollars."—*Rochester Journal.*

"I might produce many more favorable notices from the press, but forbear."

We had several good runs this season, including some from landlords, sheriffs and hall-owners.

I think there is nothing on the stage so likely to take the people—in as this great play. It will be in your town next Wednesday. You can begin to look out for it.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN, Manager.

Topics of the Time.

—A parrot has just died in Clinton, Mass., known to be at least ninety years old. It had not talked much for twenty years.

—Twenty years ago it required over five tons of coal to make a ton of iron rails; now a ton of steel rails can be made from the ore with half that quantity of coal.

—They are cultivating the poppy in France very largely of late. Over fifty thousand acres are thus occupied, yielding last year 2,000,000 francs worth of opium.

—A self-opening envelope, with a thread in the edge of the upper flap, by pulling which the envelope is quickly and neatly opened, is the newest invention of stationery.

—A young lady at Rockport, Texas, looked in her glass as she was about to retire, and was horrified to see a large tarantula resting quietly in the place where she was about to stow herself for the night.

—The largest mass of gold yet discovered in Nevada was found near Osceola. It weighed twenty-four pounds and fifteen ounces, and, as it contained very little quartz, its coin value was not far from \$4,000.

—On the tax lists of London there are not as many male servants by 42,000 as there were two years ago. This, with other facts, shows a strong disposition to economize, the effect and evidence of hard times. Increase of tramps and crime will follow.

—The late Senator Morton is said to have read newspapers more than books. He often felt the want of a more general acquaintance with literature, but never pretended to knowledge he didn't possess, nor was unwilling to ask for information. His favorite poetry was "Paradise Lost."

—A library and reading-room for the use of the employees of the Western division of the Pennsylvania Railroad has just been established in Pittsburgh. The railroad company furnish the rooms, fixtures, and books, and the employees, by a small monthly payment, meet their current expenses.

—The war correspondent of the *London News* says that at the battle near Kazlev, where the Russians were defeated, "a Russian officer, who was observed gallantly endeavoring to rally the men, was killed, and the body, when subsequently discovered, proved to be that of a woman. She was buried where she fell."

—An influential Southern paper observes that coal manufactures increase as rapidly in the South during the next decade as they have during that which is just past, while her agricultural interests continue also to flourish, it will be a matter of entire indifference to her whether we have Protection or Free Trade.

—The State of Texas has just purchased 1,400 acres of land, with valuable buildings and improvements, near Hempstead, for the State University for Colored Youth. The price paid was \$12,000. The intention is to combine the State University with the Agricultural and Mechanical College, the same in effect to be a branch of the college at Bryan.

—Among several ancient coins found lately near Jerusalem were shekels and half-shekels of Judea, which are considered by many to be the most interesting of all ancient coins. They are of silver, and belong to the time of the Great High Priest Simon Maccabeus. On the obverse side they have the cup of manna, and on the other the budding rod, with legends in Hebrew. The date is the Hebrew year 1, being the first of the pontificate of Prince Serrion, or 144 years before the birth of Christ. In spite of their great age, the coins are said to be in fine preservation, both sides being perfectly legible.

—The new lance recently adopted in the Austrian service, after a long series of experiments with the weapons of the Cossack and Prussian patterns, is nine feet one inch in length. The point is made of Bessemer steel, its length being slightly over seven inches, and the butt is shot with the same metal. Two long bands of iron attach the head to the staff, and a leather strap, for the arm of the man carrying it to pass through, is fixed to the latter at about four feet from its lower extremity. The total weight of the weapon is four pounds. Before the end of the year all the lancer regiments in the Austrian army are to be armed with the new weapon.

—A curious story is told of General Todleben, the famous Russian engineer. In the beginning of the Crimean War he distinguished himself so greatly by his skill in constructing field works that he was recommended to the czar for promotion to the rank of staff officer. When the honor was about to be conferred, it was found, to the general consternation, that he was a Jew. Such a thing as a Jew being a Russian staff officer never having been heard of, the czar was told it was impossible. "Very well," said the emperor, "let Todleben be baptized!" This was counting without the Jewish engineer. When the proposition was made to him, he declined promotion on such a condition, for it would kill his old mother, then eighty years of age. After awhile, however, the mother died; Todleben was baptized a Greek Catholic, and was elevated to the imperial engineer staff.

Readers and Contributors.

Accepted: "Old Year and New," "A Hero Tried and True," "Lost Writings," "The Nor Light," "Spending Two Fortunes," "The Wisdom of a Sigh," "A Rush for Fame," "How Dared He?" "The Last of Love."

Declined: "Devil Dick," "Beautiful Hudson," "Child's Prayer," "A Happy Home," "The Soldier's Bride," "Was it a Tragedy," "Spoken in Vain," "A New Life," "The Peacock's Bath," "Miserable Happy," "The Old Clock's Story."

MAY M. Sorry we cannot use poem. It is in excellent spirit, but much too long for what it has to narrate.

J. H. K. Parrots are sold for from six to twenty dollars by bird dealers. Dealers in willow-wax sell the article you mention.

S. S. W. Have as much of the kind of matter you suggest as the paper requires. Do not care to make any further arrangements.

YOUNG GALLANT. Say, merely: "Dear Miss S.—Accept this little gift, with the compliments of the season," signing your name. The album is a nice thing for a gift.

QUESTIONER. Try the experiment, and decide by a test. As the strong overcomes the weak, we should say the tobacco and nicotine would be too much for the coffee.

FRANK B. We have no photograph of the gentleman named, nor do we know where they can be had, except by application to the original. Have not his address, please.

MISS A. C. W. Asks if we can suggest two nice, short names, that are considerably alike, for twin boys.—Elmer and Aymer, Alan and Evan, Roy and Ray, Guy and Ray, Harry and Henry, Sherry and Perry, Maland and Roland, Harry and Larry, Shirley and Stanley.

A READER. Nothing so good for granulated eyelids as to touch, daily, with the mixture of olive and granules disappear, being careful not to let the mixture touch the eye. Citron and mercurial ointment, also, are both good, but don't strain the eyes by too much use in strong light, or by night-work.

WRONGED READER. The friend evidently was an enemy, and is a very good subject to avoid in future. The lady was weak, to have been so easily persuaded to accept his story. However, if she sincerely regrets her mistake, we see no good reason for your refusal to forgive and forget. She doubtless will profit by the experience.

NEMO. No one can fathom a girl's caprices or moods. In this case there doubtless is some grave reason for the lady's change of mind. It will be unwise to press her for an explanation. Wait the cure or revelation a few weeks or months will surely bring. Offer her nothing but kindness, and do not press your attentions on her, if she has firmly determined not to be your wife, no persuasion on your part will do any good. So wait and hope.

WELL-WISHER. The civil laws of the several States differ as to marriage prerequisites. Some of the churches forbid first cousins to marry, but the Statutes do not. Even a closer consanguinity is no bar in some States, and in Great Britain, where the Baron Rothschild wed his niece, the law of nature, without reference to relationship, forbids that like should marry like. If you and the lady are of wholly different temperaments, your union is fit and proper, we should say.

EDITH LLOYD. Silver is more than ever the rage for personal ornaments. Exquisite ear-rings, pins, pendants, and necklaces, come in the dainty frost-silver. The necklaces, lovely clusters of flowers in Blagrove work, are especially beautiful with black silk costumes. Silver rings, flat and square, are worn; and handles are giving place to wide, thin bands of silver, plain and simple, and some of the jewelry is mostly used with dinner or evening dress, being too light and delicate for street wear.

Mrs. G. L. A. Tinsel is a very fashionable trimming. Fringes of silk, fringes of wool, fringes of gold

Monroe. "Take him by shoulders and heels then—and leave."

His words were accompanied by the action. There was a heavy splash, a commotion of the water—and silence. Their freight had disappeared.

In an instant the boat had already drifted away from the dark spot where the helpless victim had sunk.

One impulse from the oars and it was lost in the darkness.

"Ashore! Quick as lightning!" spoke the captain, in low, excited tones.

In fifteen minutes more they had regained the stern of their ship, and the mate had ascended her side, rope in hand.

"What is that?" exclaimed the captain, with a scared utterance, as he slightly stumbled.

"What?" quickly rejoined the mate.

"I stepped on something soft."

"Oh! it's a roll of oakum, that was flung into the boat this morning. Mount up here, quick! We must get to bed."

They did not hear a muttered sound, that came from the bow of the boat, and that seemed to form itself into these words: "Blame your awkward feet! Is them your sea-legs?"

Phil Hardy, their dwarfish foe, had gone to the bottom of the East river, and all his secrets with him. This was all they could think of, and their guilty souls were full of superstitious fear as they hastily retired to the cabin of the ship, not sure but that the spirit of the murdered boy might have preceded them.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TRAPPED.

The letter of which Phil had proved such an inefficient postman, and which had fallen into the wrong hands, ran as follows:

"310 GLOBE STREET, NEW YORK.

"DEAR HARVEY:—You will be surprised to learn that I am in your city, now, instead of in my old home at Liverpool. How I came here is a long and not very agreeable tale, which I shall have to tell you in person. I have been through the most serious perils, but am safe here now, in the home of some worthy people.

"But I know they are too poor to be burdened with me, and I wish you to devise some means of taking me to my aunt's. You know who I mean, Mrs. Hannah Conson. She lives somewhere above Harlem, I believe.

"Let me hear from you without delay, as I am a little fearful about staying in this pestiferous New York. Please excuse the shortness of this note. It is only a business paper, you see, and my messenger is waiting anxiously for it.

"Don't fail to answer at once, and don't forget that I am still, your true ALICE HOMER.

It may be seen that this letter gave Andrew Cunningham, into whose hands it had fallen, an opportunity to prosecute his schemes which he was not slow to perceive. Alice had put a weapon, which might prove fatal to her, into the hands of her worst enemy.

But all unconscious of this she waited, on the afternoon of her return from the Park, somewhat impatiently for an answer to her letter.

Little dreamed any of them into what deadly perils Phil had fallen, and his grandmother was getting quite tired at his ridiculous delay.

"Phil is just at the age when boys get to be perfect nuisances," she said, in a vexed tone. "That's just him. If I send him for a pound of sugar, half the time he will go to the West Indies for it. Or be long enough gone. I must really train that boy some."

She was quite oblivious of the fact that she had for years been training him into these careless habits.

"Oh! never mind, Mrs. Hardy," protested Alice. "It is not really so particular."

"If you had only told him you were in haste," continued the old lady.

"It does not matter at all. It is only the curiosity of an idle woman that ails me. If I do not get an answer until to-morrow it will not matter. I wish you would only put me to work at something."

"I would like to give you something to bring back the color to those white cheeks," said the compassionate old lady. "I do not like to see you looking so."

"Don't mind that, Mrs. Hardy. That is only my fright at the Park. I do not intend to continue looking white. Let me pare those potatoes for you."

"What! With those delicate hands? No, indeed. You shall do nothing of the sort."

"You do not know what these delicate hands are capable of. I shall scrub off that table, at any rate."

There ensued an amusing battle for the possession of the scrubbing-brush, which Alice had seized with a great show of vigor. The old lady conquered, and held it aloft in laughing triumph.

"Catch me letting you do any such thing," she cried.

"Then I only see one thing that remains to do," replied Alice.

"And what is that?"

"For you to get a glass case, and seal me up in it, and stand me in this corner for a parlor ornament."

"And a beautiful ornament you would make, my sweet, pale child," said Mrs. Hardy, fondly stroking the face of her guest. "Why, you are as nervous yet!"

"I am afraid I am rather frightened yet. Poor little Susy; she must have thought I was wild—Now you shall let me do something. That is the only way I can cure my hands of this trembling."

They were interrupted by the appearance of a young man at the open door, who inquired for Miss Homer.

"That is my name," said Alice.

"I was directed up here from below," he replied. "I have a letter for you, miss."

"A letter for me!" she exclaimed, surprised. "Why, who—But Phil may have delivered mine," she continued to Mrs. Hardy. "He may not have waited for an answer."

She took the letter from the spruce-looking youth who held it, and glanced at the handwriting.

"That will do, sir. Is there an answer?"

"I think there is, miss," he replied.

"Please wait a moment, then, and I will see."

She opened the envelope, and quickly read the letter, her eyes lighting up with satisfaction as she did so.

"He speaks of a carriage. Is it at hand?" she asked.

"Yes, miss. It is just round the corner, in the next street."

"Be kind enough to wait outside for a minute. I have something to say privately to this lady," continued Alice, quietly closing the door.

"I fear I must leave you, my kind-hearted friend," she said.

"Leave me!" faltered Mrs. Hardy.

"Yes. It was necessary I should not intrude too long upon you. I wrote to a gentleman friend requesting him to take me to the residence of an aunt of mine, who lives just out of New York."

"You have an answer from him?"

"No. He is from home. This is from his sister. She seems to have felt it necessary to open the letter and has sent a carriage for me."

"Are you sure it is from his sister?"

"Oh, yes! There can be no doubt of that."

"It struck me it might be another trick of your enemies—But then, nobody would get the letter from Phil but the right person. I know that. I suppose it was because the gentleman was not at home that he did not bring the answer himself. I do wish you had not been so quick, Miss Homer. I do so hate to lose you."

"You must not think that I will forget you," replied Alice, gently. "You have been too kind for that. If I stay in New York you shall often see me."

"Why, you are not going?" cried Susy, breaking in upon them.

"Yes, my dear. A friend of mine has sent his carriage for me."

"But I can't bear to have you go," exclaimed the child, bursting into tears. "I love you so."

"Love at first sight is not always durable," replied Miss Homer, smilingly.

"I don't care! I shall never quit loving you!" cried the sobbing child. "And I don't see why you can't stay."

"There are reasons, my dear," replied Alice, taking the distressed child in her arms. "I cannot stay to be a burden to Mrs. Hardy; for one thing."

"You are not a burden!" exclaimed Mrs. Hardy, energetically.

"I must try not to become one. I shall never forget my two dear friends. And I shall be sure to see you often. But now I feel that it is necessary that I should go to my aunt's."

"Perhaps it is," responded Mrs. Hardy. "And yet, somehow, I hate to see you going."

"And the kindly old lady rubbed her eyes fiercely."

"And it may be one of your enemies, too," declared Susy. "You were so afraid of them, and you might be going right into their hands."

"Somebody may have robbed Phil of the letter," suggested Mrs. Hardy.

"Why, I thought you were so confident of his honesty?"

"But he is only a boy," faltered the old lady.

"I am satisfied that he has done his errand properly," replied Alice. "I have here a letter from Miss Russell, which I have no doubt was written by her."

"Let me look at it," pleaded Susy.

The lady handed it with a smile to the inquisitive child, and turned to bid the old lady good-bye.

"Don't forget me!" cried Susy, springing with a bound into her new friend's arms, and warmly kissing and fondling her. "And you must be sure to come and see us very soon."

"Certainly I will," replied Alice, deeply affected by the child's fondness for her. "Meanwhile keep this to remember me."

She slipped a golden locket, with a curiously twisted chain, round the child's neck, and kissed her again as she set her down.

"Now, good-bye, dear friends," said Alice, slipping quickly out of the door, as if fearing to be overcome by their evident emotion.

The letter lay on the floor where Susy had thoughtlessly let it fall.

"I am ready now," announced Alice briefly, to the youth who was impatiently waiting. "Is the carriage far?"

"Just around the next corner, miss," he replied, leading the way.

Had she been able to see his face she would certainly have detected something sinister in its expression, innocent of guile as she was.

There was a sneering grimace upon it which indicated a wicked satisfaction in his success. His hand was thrust deep into his pocket as if grasping some substantial reward for his services.

But all that was visible to her was the back of a closely-cropped head, surmounted by a cap set jauntily over one ear.

"This way, miss," he explained, as they reached the foot of the stairs. "Your street here was a little narrow, and the carriage stopped in the next turn."

In a minute more they had reached the wider street in question.

A stylish coach, drawn by two gray horses, stood waiting there, the driver upon the box.

The latter person was not in livery, and was a roughly-dressed native of the Emerald Isle.

He seemed weary of the delay, and called quickly to the youth to open the carriage door, and help the lady in.

"Do you know the directions?" she asked him, somewhat timidly.

"Certainly, ma'am. It's to Mrs. Conson's that I was told to drive you. She lives out beyond Harlem. I know the place bravely."

"Very well," she replied, reassured by his confident tone.

She stepped into the carriage, the door was closed, the youth mounted beside the driver, and in a minute more they were driving at a brisk pace out the New York streets.

"That's a gay equipage for a livery," said a boy, who had been looking on curiously.

"That's no livery," replied his companion.

"It's just that," rejoined the first speaker. "I don't know the driver, but I bet I could hunt that gay young chap aside of him."

"Twigged him afore, hey, Joe Dot?"

"Yes. And he aint none too good. Wonder where they're drivin' that pretty woman to."

"To the Park, like enough," said the other, turning away.

Meanwhile the carriage was moving rapidly out Broadway, and thence out Fifth avenue, along the eastern boundary of the Park, and into the more thinly-settled region beyond.

The drive was a long one, and they seemed to have traveled miles beyond the upper extremity of the Park, when at length they drew up at the gate of a pretentious mansion, that stood back from the thinly built up road, surrounded by a dense clump of trees.

The youth sprang to the ground and opened the gate, permitting the carriage to pass through.

It drove slowly up a graveled carriage-way which wound through thick evergreens to the front of the house, and drew up at the steps of a long portico.

"Mrs. Conson is not well, miss," said the youth. "Step up this way. You will find her in the parlor here at the side."

It was with the first feeling of misgiving which she had experienced during her ride that Alice followed the briskly-moving boy.

He entered the hall, and they opened the door of a side parlor. She stepped in and the portal was quickly closed behind her. Her eyes were lifted, expecting to see the vaguely-remembered form of her aunt. Instead her shrinking gaze fell on the calmly triumphant face of her mortal foe, Andrew Cunningham.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 405.)

Margoun, the Strange:

OR,

Gilbert Grayling's Young Wife.

BY WM. MASON TURNER, M. D.,

AUTHOR OF "COLLEGE RIVALS," "MASKED MINER," "\$50,000 REWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE DAY BREAKING.

MARGOUN sat alone in the study at the old Lodge. The room was in shadow, for the light in the lamp was turned low.

The dreary night-winds of the sultry summer sighed sadly around the old house. They were in keeping with the melancholy thoughts that crowded upon one another in rapid succession through the Hindoo's mind. His reveries carried him back to other lands, far beyond the rolling seas.

It was past nine o'clock, and Thorle Manton had left for the Grange nearly an hour before. So the East Indian was left alone to his musings.

But, suddenly, the door was opened and Aleck entered. He had been to the post-office at Shoreville for the Lodge mail. He brought with him a single letter. It was in a large envelope, bearing what looked like an official seal.

Aleck laid it upon the table and withdrew.

Margoun drew the envelope toward him and raised the light. Then he glanced at the superscription. A thrill shot through him, and a violent shiver ran over his tall frame.

The envelope bore, in the upper left corner, a crown; under it was this: "OFFICE OF THE BRITISH CONSUL-GENERAL, NEW YORK."

The address was as follows:

"TO MR. MARGOUN NENA-VASHTI,

"Care of Thorle Manton, Esq.,

"Shoreville P. O., New York."

The East Indian tore open the envelope with greedy fingers. Two folded sheets dropped out. One was tied around with a blue ribbon; the other was loose. Taking up the latter, Margoun read this:

"OFFICE BRITISH CONSUL-GENERAL,

"NEW YORK CITY,

"June 18th, 18—"

"DEAR AND GRACIOUS PR.—I beg leave to inclose herein a document, received more than a month since, at the Consulate, for you. Only to-day have I learned where it could reach you, and I forward at once. Asking that you will honor me by acknowledging receipt, with consideration, etc., etc.

THE BRITISH CONSUL-GENERAL."

Margoun laid the sheet aside and picked up the other. With trembling fingers he untied the knotted ribbon. Spreading open the thick sheet, he glanced once at its contents. Then as a low, glad cry escaped him, he continued: "How can I do it! How can I leave him!"

He thrust the papers into the bosom of his tunic, and hurried into the chair again. A half-triumphant, half-regretful expression resting upon his dusky face.

At that instant he chanced to look toward the rear window. The sash was flung up to let the passing breezes blow in. Margoun started to his feet and thrust his hand in his bosom.

Standing on the outside, looking in, was a tall, white-faced man, with a pistol in his hand. He was on the point of leveling the weapon; but the Hindoo's sudden movement disconcerted him, for he immediately turned and fled.

Like lightning Margoun darted forward, sprung through the open window, and disappeared.

The dark night wore on.

Thus still lingered away; nor had Margoun returned. The servants had long since retired, and a brooding silence settled upon the Lodge.

Midnight with its ghostly associations came and passed. Then one o'clock.

A sharp pistol-shot rang out in the darkness near the Lodge. Then all was silent. But a few minutes later, a wild, almost unearthly groan echoed on the air. Then the same dreary silence settled down again, only broken by the sighing of the night-wind through the thick copse.

Early that same evening Mrs. Grayling sat silent and motionless in her parlour.

A strange fire was burning in her pale blue eyes, and a frown brooded over her marble-like brow.

"Strange! Where can Florine be?" she ejaculated, moving restlessly in her chair. "I have hunted her high and low, and have sent messengers for her in every direction, but to no purpose. Her things are here; but—"

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Her things are here; but—"

amazement, picking up the other paper, and opening it, read it through. His fingers trembled and the sheet slid from them.

"Margoum was a native prince, my darling," he said, sinking into a chair. "He revolted against what he considered a usurpation of his rights. But in view of his high caste, and great influence, he has been unconditionally restored to his full rank and to his great estates! Wonder upon wonder!"

Months upon months rolled by; the Centennial year of American Independence dawned upon the world.

One day Thorle Manton and his young wife were strolling through the grand exhibition grounds. Behind them came a nurse, rolling in a baby-carriage a youngster, who was just old enough to look at you, and dimple his face with smiles when you called him *Margoum*.

As the happy husband and party were passing the house occupied in the "grounds" by the English Commission, Thorle started violently as he saw, coming from the building, a tall, dusky-faced man in rich oriental garb. At his heels trod two attendants, attired almost as gorgeously as himself, who were evidently their master.

The swarthy foreigner drew nearer. His eyes suddenly fell upon Manton. He sprang forward.

"SARIB!"

"SARIB!" and the two strong men were locked in a loving embrace.

And the youngster in the cradle looked up and laughed merrily as he heard his own name!

The two friends had met again.

But no word was spoken of the poor misguided one, over whose grave in the distant cemetery of Grayling Gange the summer grass had long been springing—no word was said of her, who in her brief young life had been "The Loved of Many Men!"

THE END.

CHRISTMAS SHADOWS.

The needles have dropped from her nervous hands
As she watches the dying embers glow,
For out from the broad old chimney-place
Come ghostly shadows of "long ago!"

Shadows that carry her back again
To the time of her childhood's artless joy;
Shadows that show her a tiny row
Of stockings awaiting the Christmas toy.

Shadows that show her the faces loved
Of many a half-forgotten friend,
And the Christmas Eve it is passing by,
While Past and Present in shadows blend.

Alone in the dear old homestead now,
With only the shadows of "Auld Lang Syne,"
The clock is ticking the moments on,
While the tears in her aged eyes still shine.

If only from out the silent world—
The world of shadows which mock her so—
One might return to his vacant chair,
To sit with her in the fire-light glow!

If only—Was that a white, white hand
That seemed to beckon her out of the gloom?
Or was it the embers' last bright flash
That startled the shadows round the room?

The Christmas Eve has passed at length;
A glorious day from the night is born;
The shadows are gone from earth away,
And the bells are ringing for Christmas morn.

But ah! by the broad old chimney-place
The angel of death keeps watch alone,
For straight to the Christ-child's beckoning arms
A longing spirit has gladly flown.

Gold Dan:

OR,

The White Savages of the Great Salt Lake.

A TERRIBLE TALE OF THE DANITES OF MORMON LAND.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,

AUTHOR OF "VELVET HAND," "INJUN DICK,"

"OVERLAND KIT," "WOLF DEMON,"

"WITCHES OF NEW YORK,"

"BLACK DIAMOND," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A MILL TALK.

The elder was down, mortally hurt. Just a single moment of agony, and then all was over; the ball had struck him square in the temple, just above the nose.

For a moment the Danite chief stared, astonished at the fearful sight—the dreadful work of an unknown foe, for the shot had come from the window, fired by some one concealed in the grounds without. The secret slayer had spared the dark Danite chief and selected the elder as a victim, that was evident.

And yet, without the house, there was not a sign to denote the presence of a living creature, bird, beast, or human.

The Danite turned to the casement and surveyed the grounds without. Twenty paces away was the open stockade gate, left open by the Danite himself on his hurried entrance. Through this the unknown foe had fired the fatal shot, and then had fled.

"Was it friend or foe?" the dark Danite mused. "If friend, why did he not wait that I might know whom to thank for the service, for, in truth, this brutal dog meant to kill me, if I interfered in his schemes."

Thus contemptuously did the agent of Mormon vengeance refer to the man now weltering in his gore, who, living, had been one of the "pillars of the church of Zion."

As the Danite gazed upon the ghastly face of the dead man, a strange feeling of terror came stealing over his heart of iron.

There was no mistaking the mark of the bullet. The self-same hand which had laid the burly Googler low, in the street of Corinne, had given his brother Mormon his death-wound! The mark of the big derringer bullet proved that, and then instantly to his mind flashed thoughts of Gold Dan; but if Dan had dealt this blow, why had he not spared the Mormon and taken him, the one he had most to fear?

The Danite glared around him, apparently seeking an answer to the question, and then, out upon the stillness of the night, rung the sounds of a horse's hoofs, urged to topmost speed.

Was the new-comer friend or foe?

A horseman came dashing through the gate, reined up his steed so abruptly that the brute came trembling back upon his haunches, and then threw himself to the ground.

It was the Texan!

And so white—so full of excitement that he seemed like a maniac.

He darted into the house, and pistol in hand, stood trembling at the door, eagerly listening as if he had been pursued by a score of fiends.

"What's the matter?" asked Clark in his deep-toned voice, so quiet and yet so full of command, advancing as he spoke and laying his broad palm upon the shoulder of the other.

"This man! he is a devil! I cannot kill him!" the breathless, gasping horseman exclaimed, shivering with nervous excitement, and yet evidently feeling the soothing restraint of Clark's powerful will.

"You speak of Gold Dan?"

"Yes."

"You have not killed him, then?"

"Yes, I have killed him twice," the man answered, incoherently, the nervous excitement beginning to subside, and with it the frantic strength which had sustained him so well during the wild scenes of the night. His breath came heavily, and he leaned for support against the door-casement.

"Killed him twice, eh?" the Danite repeated; "why he must have as many lives as a cat."

"Through a trick, I lured him from his house, and then the instant his head appeared without the door, I drove a bullet into his skull at a foot's distance."

"Well, that ought to have settled any ordinary man," Clark observed, in his quiet way, still keeping a close watch with his keen eyes upon the agitated face of the other.

"And then when he fell prostrate at my feet—fell like a log, hewed down by the ax of the chopper—to make my vengeance more certain, I emptied my revolvers into his body."

"And yet he escaped?" Clark exclaimed, jumping to a quick conclusion.

"I tell you I saw him dead at my feet!" the man cried, vehemently, "with no more life in him than is in the raw-hide fastened to yonder saddle, blood gushing from him from a half-dozen wounds, each one big enough to let out a life."

"Oh, then he is dead!" Clark began to believe that the man was either drunk or crazy.

"No, he is not dead, or else if he is dead his spirit haunts me!" the Texan cried, trembling with excitement and his fierce, black eyes rolling in such frenzy that they seemed likely to pop out of his head.

Clark laughed grimly; neither man nor devil could daunt his soul; the first he despised, the second he doubted. He had seen many a stout fellow go down in fierce and bloody fire, fated never to rise again in life, but never a one of them all had ever come back to revisit the glimpses of the moon, to his knowledge.

"After I had slain him," the Texan continued, "after I had given him wounds enough to let out the lives of six men, I flung myself upon my horse, and fled. I rode straight to your den, just as you directed. I found the horse there, as you told me I should. I mounted, and rode straight for this point, according to the instructions fastened to the saddle; but an hour ago, when I turned into the main trail, who should I come face to face with, but this man!"

"With Gold Dan?"

"Yes; unhurt—unharmful!"

"You are sure?"

"Yes; either he it was, or the devil in his likeness."

"And what did you do?"

"Fired six more shots, straight at his heart!"

"Yes!"

"And he fell, all bloody as before."

"And you fled again?"

"Yes."

"Without waiting to see whether your shots had really taken effect or not?"

"I waited for nothing," the man answered, wildly. "I fled; that is all. Wait! you will see his spirit come riding up soon!"

From the wildness of the man's manner, the idea occurred to the Danite that all his story was but the fancy of a disordered brain, and so he resolved to act accordingly.

"I have changed my plans," he said, abruptly. "Instead of going to Salt-Lake I want you to return to my den in the mountains, and keep close there till I come to you."

"I will, but I will not return the way I came," the man replied, with a shudder; "his spirit bars the path!" And then, without more words, he flung himself into the saddle and rode off in the direction of Salt-Lake.

"Poor devil! he's mad!" the Danite exclaimed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SECRET SLAYER AGAIN.

The Texan had fled at his horse's topmost speed, and the Danite watched his departure in amazement.

"It's no use to send him to Salt-Lake as long as he's in this condition," he muttered. "The man is a lunatic beyond a doubt. I don't believe that he's seen Gold Dan at all; in madness he dreams of delusions."

The sound of the hoof-beats of the flying steed died away in the distance, and the Danite dismissed the subject from his mind.

"Now for Polly," he murmured, as he turned and again looked upon the body of the Mormon, slain so mysteriously by the secret assassin.

"Whoever fired the shot did me a service, for Biddeman meant mischief," he mused. "The girl is up-stairs, I suppose. Poor child! it was a narrow escape for her; this fellow would have had no mercy upon her, and to think that for years I have been low and degraded enough to do the dirty work of such rascals as this house and the rest of his brethren! Bah! I am worse than a red-skin!"

With this contemptuous exclamation, the Danite proceeded to search the ranch in order to discover the prison-place of the girl, which was soon found, and great was the joy of the captive when she looked upon the stern face of the Danite chief.

Man of blood though he was, hated by some and feared by all, yet on this occasion he seemed like a guardian angel to the girl.

"Oh, Mr. Clark, you will take me away from this dreadful place, won't you?" she cried.

"Yes, you are free to depart; no one will attempt to detain you," he answered.

"And Mr. Biddeman?" Polly questioned, with a timid glance around as though she feared the burly Mormon would step forward and attempt to prevent her departure.

"You need have no more fear of him," replied Clark, in his grim way. "He will never trouble anybody any more, in this world."

The girl understood his meaning, and a slight shudder passed over her slender frame.

"And you had to kill him to save me?" she asked, grateful and yet regretful that blood had been shed.

"No, he did not fall by my hand, although as things stood, the chances were that he would either kill me or I him, within ten minutes, when some unknown party settled the matter by shooting the elder through the window."

"And you do not know who it was?"

"No; not the slightest idea, excepting that it was no friend to the Mormons, and perhaps not to me, although, if the party had chosen, he might as easily have settled me as the elder, for I was nearest to the window."

"Oh, let me get away from this horrid place!" the girl cried, impulsively, advancing toward the door.

The Danite moved to one side, to allow her to pass.

She paused, irresolutely, in the entry.

"I am afraid to go alone," she said; "will you not come with me?"

"Afraid to go alone, and yet not afraid to trust me?" he asked, his strong voice growing quite soft, and even tender.

Truthfully she extended her hand to him.

"No; I am not at all afraid of you, though men do talk evil of you."

The stern face of the Danite seemed to grow darker and sterner than ever, as he took the little hand of the girl, and conducted her down the stairs.

"The horses are in the corral," he said, as

they paused by the open door of the ranch; "within an hour's time, you shall be safe at home."

"Oh, how can I ever repay you for this great kindness!" she exclaimed, in an outburst of gratitude.

"Repay me?" he replied, and his voice seemed to tremble as he spoke; "why, when you hear men speak of John Clark—when you hear him called a villain and a cutthroat, just close your ears and try to remember that, bad as he was, he dared to brave the wrath of the Saints of Utah by rescuing you, a helpless victim, from their hands."

"Why do you stay here?" she cried, abruptly. "This is not the only country in all the world! If you were to go to some far-off land, no one there would know any thing about you; you could begin life anew, and if you haven't done quite right in the past, you can strive to make up for it by doing a great deal of good in the future."

"Polly, your advice is good, and I ought to act upon it," he replied, slowly, "but it's hard work for a man to get out of the traces when once he's fairly in; besides, I haven't got anything to live for, and I might as well die here as anywhere else. There's a tough time ahead for the Mormons, or I'm out in my reckoning. In the future they won't be able to carry matters with the same high hand that they have done in the past. No, Polly, I'll stay here and die in my tracks, with my boots on, as many a better man than me has done."

"Isn't there any thing that will induce you to quit this life and go away?" she asked, earnestly.

And as she put the question, looking eagerly with her big, blue eyes full into the dark-browed face of the Danite, a wild wish came up in the stern heart, which long ago he had believed to be dead to all tender emotions.

"Yes, Polly, one thing would induce me to go away and make a new try for it."

"Oh, go—do go!" she cried, impulsively.

"If I could get a little girl like you, Polly, to go with me—to devote her young life to trying to make a better man of me, why, I'd try the rifle!"

The girl colored in confusion, and yet her embarrassment was not unminged with joy, for in her heart of hearts she favored this great giant of a man—this terrible Danite chief, Long John Clark, Duke of Corinne.

It was the old story. As the poet says:

"In joining contrasts lieth love's delights,
Hence hands of snow in palms of russet lie;
The form of Hercules affects the sylphs;
And force that eases the lion's fear-proof heart,
Find their loved lodge in breasts where tremors dwell."

"Polly, what do you say?" the Danite asked; "will you go with me? I'm no Mormon with a dozen wives! In fact, in all my life, I never before saw the woman that was worth two straws to me until you came across my path; but you, why, I've seen you grow up from a child, and I've watched over you as a father would watch over his first-born, and when I heard that this brute of a Mormon had lured you away, I made up my mind to have you back, if it cost a dozen lives. I'm the Mormon dog, but I'm ugly sometimes, and just as apt to bite friend as foe; they know it, too, and there's not one of the Saints, from Brigham downward, but will think twice before he crosses the path of John Clark. Come! say the word, and I'll take you miles and miles away from here! We'll go 'way off over the Rockies to the golden shores of the Pacific; we'll find a home amid the foot-hills, where we can forget the past—forget that we ever knew such a place as this modern Sodom of a Utah!"

"I will go anywhere with you," the girl said, simply and shyly, hiding her face upon his broad breast as she spoke.

Heaven help me to treat you well, so that you may never have cause to regret this step!" the Danite exclaimed, earnestly, stooping his massive head and touching the forehead of the girl with his lips.

And then, as the soft sound of the caress trembled on the air, there came the sharp, quick bark of a pistol-shot, fired from the extreme end of the entry in the rear; the door suddenly slammed to and the key turned in the lock outside.

A stifled gasp of mortal agony came from the red lips of the girl; her head sunk back, and as quick as the lightning's flash the consciousness came to John Clark that he held a piece of lifeless clay within his arms.

For a moment he stood like one turned into stone, and then a step in the front door seemed to rouse him into action again, and, turning, he faced Gold Dan upon the threshold!

CHAPTER XXIX.

A CLEW AT LAST.

FRAMED in the open doorway appeared the figure of the plainsman, gazing with astonished eyes upon the tragic scene.

Involuntarily the strong right hand of the Danite grasped the butt of his revolver, while at the same time with the other he supported the helpless form of the stricken girl.

But Gold Dan was on the alert; he had been assailed too often lately to permit himself to be again taken at a disadvantage. His revolver was out, and with the shining tube he covered the broad chest of the Danite chief.

"Don't attempt to lift your hand, or I'll drill a hole right through you!" he cried. "I'm not seeking a quarrel, but if it does come, I'll have the crack!"

The thought of the Danite had been that the plainsman was the author of the mischief done to the girl, but a moment's reflection dispelled the idea. The shot had been fired from the rear, and almost at the same moment that Gold Dan had appeared in the front doorway.

Clearly it was impossible that he could be the secret slayer.

In the mind of the Danite there was not the slightest doubt that the shot had been aimed at his life, but a sudden movement of the girl had baffled the plan, and at a fearful cost.

"Go your way, stranger!" cried Clark; "you and I will never be friends, but at the present moment I seek only the cowardly hood who fired the shot that has resulted so terribly."

"Is she dead, poor child?"

"Alas! I fear so," and big tears stood in the eyes of the stern, strong man.

A convulsive movement unclosed the lips of the stricken girl, and a few words escaped from them.

It was the last effort of life.

"Oh, how could you kill me?" she murmured, and then she whispered a name; so low and faint that it seemed only a sigh, but the quick ears of the Danite caught the sound, and a look of wonder passed over his face.

"Can it be possible?" he murmured. He bent over the girl as though he fain would have questioned her, but it was too late; the spirit had fled, and stern John Clark saw that he held a lifeless form within his arms.

Slowly, and as gently as a mother soothing her first-born, the fierce chief of border war carried the helpless form and deposited it upon the rude settee, which formed part of the furniture of the room, laid the nerveless arms carefully across the swelling bosom, that, but a few short minutes before had beat with joy and hope, and then he turned and faced the plainsman, who still lingered upon the threshold.

"You seek something—what is it?"

"A tall, dark fellow who has twice attempted my life to-night," replied Gold Dan, promptly.

"What have I to do with him?"

"Is he not one of your gang?"

"My gang!" Clark asked, slowly, but with a vacant expression upon his face, which plainly revealed that his thoughts were far away.

"Yes, a Danite."

"Oh, no."

The denial did not convince the plainsman.

"Twice, to-night, have I escaped him, almost by a miracle," he said. "He came this way, and I have followed close upon his footsteps. This is a Mormon ranch, and just the place to afford him shelter."

"He is not here."

"But he has been here!"

"Perhaps."

"And where is he now?"

The Danite shook his head.

"If he was one of my gang, as you evidently believe, do you suppose, for a single instant, that I would give you any information in regard to him? I say to you that he is not here."

There is no one here beside myself and two lifeless bodies. If you doubt me, search the house; you are welcome to do so, as far as I am concerned. For the present, I do not wish to quarrel with you—I do not wish to quarrel with any mortal soul until I have hunted down the slayer of this poor child, and given him to as cruel a death as the mind of man can invent, and then, after that is accomplished, I'm your meat, or anybody else's."

The plainsman was a little puzzled by the speech; yet it bore truth on the face of it. It was of no use, then, to waste time here, and of little avail to push onward, dismounted as he was, and so he determined to return to Corinne for the present, and there deliberate over a course of action.

"All right! I seek no quarrel except with this fellow who has twice attempted to murder me unawares. The next time we meet, perhaps the chances will be more even, and then if he escapes me, I won't complain," and with this speech, Gold Dan turned and strode away, leaving the Danite chief alone with the dead.

Motionless as a statue Clark stood until the sound of the plainsman's step died away in the distance. The Danite seemed like a man stunned by a heavy blow. In truth, it was a terrible shock. For years Clark had led the life of an outcast and a wanderer. Few of womankind had ever attracted his eyes, and, such as they were, were but toys to amuse a passing hour. But this girl—this child, so young, so innocent, so different from the bold, coarse women, the painted "angels" of the frontier towns, that she seemed like a creature cast in a different mold, had entwined herself around his heart, and now that she was torn suddenly from him, it seemed as if a great piece of his life was gone.

He walked slowly over to her side, and gazed wistfully at the pretty face now cold in death.

"If she had only lived, I might have become a different man," he muttered. "John Clark, the Danite leader—Long John Clark, the Duke of Corinne, would never more have struck terror into the souls of the Gentiles; a simple ranchman, I might have forgotten the old life, and amid my stock have led a new existence. But it was fated not to be. It is my doom, then, that I must still remain the Mormon sword—the destroying angel, the leader of the white savages, until some well-aimed bullet cuts short my thread of life and sends me to join my victims in the other world."

And then, as he stood and gazed with longing eyes upon the girl's face now stiffening in death, thoughts of the man who fired the fatal shot filled his mind; his dark face grew darker still, and a terrible oath came from his lips.

"I'll hunt him down, though all Corinne oppose me!" he cried, fiercely. "But am I sure of my game? I heard the name distinctly from the girl's lips; I think she saw him fire at me, and periled her own life to save mine. He is the secret assassin, then, who has been laying the Mormons low. It is more than possible; he, too, is the miner who has been working the lodes near Bear River, and whom we have driven off. It is plain, now, how he has managed to live all this time, but who would have believed that there was any harm in him? I know that he hated the Mormons, but I never thought that he would ever do them any mischief. I can understand, now, why he killed Googler. It was Googler who drove him away from his hidden lair, but he's struck his last blow, now; before this time, to-morrow, I will have settled him for this world."

One long, lingering look the stern, dark-browed man took at the cold and silent face, and then, stooping, he kissed the icy lips; the touch sent a chill even to his iron heart.

"I am growing womanish," he muttered, "but I'll have a bloody vengeance for this night's work!"

He closed the house up carefully, so that no strollers could enter, and then hurried away. Straight to the lair of the Danites, on Antelope island, he went, called together his rough followers and bade them prepare for the war-path.

"Look well to your weapons," the chief of the "angels" cautioned, "for we may have a hot time before we get through."

"Where-away, Cap?" asked one of the outlaws.

"Corinne, I reckon," Clark replied. "The sharps there carried things with a pretty high hand, the other night, but we mean business this time, and we'll take force enough to wipe out the whole town, if Corinne even so much as crooks a finger at us."

"That's the talk!" cried one of the gang, merrily, and the rest chimed in in assent.

A free fight was meat to these bull-dogs.

To be continued—commenced in No. 400.

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ON HAND.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

The mouth may have its power of speech,
But ah, what meaning lingers
About the motions of the hand—
The still and voiceless fingers!

A boy's father's palm may get
Although unspoken, silent,
Yet he will know just what it means
However quick and violent.

The bride she gives her mate her hand;
It means a free love-token;
He gets it often after that
When'er the peace is broken.

When on your ear a hand should drop
And make your senses mystic,
It means the owner is quite mad
And somewhat pugilistic.

If fingers in your hair should be
Provokingly entangled,
They mean it would be better far
If you had never wrangled.

If some friend holds two fingers up,
Just take it, then, as granted,
That something in the shape of V,
Or rather "five" is wanted.

Five fingers rolled into a wad,
And cast at your proboscis,
Means, with peculiar emphasis,
It's a very bad on nose.

A finger pointed at you has
A meaning rather mournful,
More than all fingers of the hand—
Indeed, it's rather scornful.

The finger which your hearer puts
So tender on his eye is
Symbolical that what you tell
Is something of a lie is.

A thumb placed gently on the nose,
The fingers free for action,
Reminds you that you are defied
Unto your satisfaction.

So hands and fingers have a speech
Whose reading will not bother,
Which you are always sure to catch
In one way or another.

And when I reach my hand to you,
Kind reader, softly take it;
It speaks of friendship tried and true
As any heart can make it.

Woods and Waters;

OR,

The Rambles of the Littleton Gun Club.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ.

VIII.

IN A DUCK-BOAT.

It was long before dawn the next morning when old Mart shook me by the arm as I lay in bed, and whispered:

"Get up, Launce, of you and Charley want fun. Tom's goin' to take the greenies out, and we're to have our route all to ourselves."

Of course it took but little time for me to get ready. Charley Green and I had arranged matters with Mart the night before, and the old man had promised to take us under his charge for the day. He seemed to have conceived an especial liking for Charley Green of late, possibly on account of the lad's humility and desire to learn. Charley was the same room as myself, and it was not long before we were both dressed and following Mart down-stairs.

As we passed the rooms of the rest of the party, the audible snores proclaimed that the occupants were still fast asleep, but we found the keeper of the light-house up and frying salt pork, and who knows what else, before the old-fashioned stove in the sitting-room, where the genial warmth and smell were alike gratifying to the senses.

"Eat all ye kin, as hot as ye kin bear it, and swaller all the hot coffee ye kin pour down," was Mart's advice, which we were not slow to follow; for the cold morning had given us an appetite. Captain Bruce was the only other member of the party who was down with us in the dark, and he it was who came out with us after breakfast to the wharf.

It was still quite dark on the land, and the water was hidden from view by a damp, chilly mist that had settled over the whole river, but a dim grayish glow could be seen far away overhead in the east, that told of coming dawn.

By the wharf lay a whole fleet of boats and scows, with head and stern lines crossing each other in every degree of complexity. Mart seized one of the lines and drew up a small skiff, sharp at both ends, decked over at bow and stern, and having an oval well in the center in which to sit. Bruce drew up a similar one, close by, and motioned me to jump in, while Charley Green unconsciously himself in Mart's craft. The guns were handed into the boats, and Bruce and Mart followed, when we cast off the lines from rings in the stern of the boats, into which they fastened with snap-hooks, and let them drop into the water. Tom Smith threw us the ends of the bow-lines, and we shoved off, pulling out into the stream.

"These North River duck-boats," said Bruce to me, as we pulled away, "are a good deal more elaborate than they use out West or on the Chesapeake. There, any old box that will hold a man and his gun will do for a duck-boat. Here on this river there is so much current and tide, and the sea comes so heavy at times, when the wind blows against stream, that a swift boat and a dry cabin are alike required. Hence they use this kind of covered canoe. It pulls easy against sea or current, and it is almost impossible to swamp it in any weather, on account of its decks and the hatch-combing around us."

"Yes," I said, "but isn't it pretty cranky?"

"Of course it is. We can't have speed and stability together in a boat of this size. If you want to cut the water you must have a narrow, sharp hull, and such a hull will roll. All you have to do is to sit down low in the boat and mind your balance. You notice that the oars don't rest in row-locks, but pass through rings, and each ring has a pin which goes into a hole in the gunwale of the boat. You see that when one is out rowing alone, with his gun before him, it may be necessary to drop the oars at times and shoot. This method prevents the oars from being lost, and is very general on all American river-boats, whether for ducking or fishing."

As he spoke, we were apparently entirely alone on the water, a sea of gray mist shutting out the shore and our companions alike, while we groped about in Cimmerian darkness. Still, Bruce seemed to be entirely certain of which way to pull, for he bent his oars with a will.

"How do you know which way to go, Bruce?" I at last inquired, rather timidly.

"Well now, Poyntz," he said, with a smile, "I hardly expected that question from a man of your sense. We're trying to go up-stream, and if you'll take these oars, you'll very soon feel the difference between that and any other method of progression."

"But, where are we going?" I inquired.

"We're going up to the feeding grounds of the ducks," he answered. "The river up here is full of islands, formed by accidental obstructions to the current, and these islands are all low and marshy at the edges. Some of them are made of nothing but mud, like those in the delta of the Mississippi, while others have bold rocky bluffs. This part of the river is very little visited by tourists, who either stop at West Point or Catalik, or else pass on in the boats to Albany, on the way to Saratoga. The consequence is that we have a good deal of game still left. It has not all been killed off."

We stopped suddenly and listened intently. We heard a confused, fluttering noise ahead of us in the fog.

"Ducks," whispered Bruce, and he dropped his oars, letting the boat drift. The next moment he and I sat in the boat, gun in hand, gazing upward.

The fluttering sound continued, mingled with quacks, and increased into a regular thunder of wings, and the next moment we heard the mov-

ing body of ducks passing overhead. It was dark below, but glowing with light above, and we could see faint shadows as the flock passed.

A flash illuminated the gloom ahead of us, and then another, followed by two loud reports.

"Now, Launce, give it to them!" whispered Bruce, and we both fired up into the moving shadows, ghostlike and ill-defined.

Then we sat and listened.

The thunder of wings was changed to a confused fluttering, mingled with loud cries of alarm; and yet, through all this noise, we heard three distinct splashes close to the boat. Bruce dropped his gun, seized the oars and backed the boat down-stream with three or four strokes, then let it drift, while he leaned over the side.

"Watch your side, Poyntz!" he said, hurriedly.

I strained my eyes through the lessening gloom; and there, close by the boat, lay a dead duck, floating, feet up, which I seized as it went down-stream. Almost at the same minute, Bruce seized one oar and sent the boat rolling off to the left, when he leaned over the side and swung in a second duck.

"That's all we'll get this morning, I think," he announced, quietly. "The fog's too thick to find the other. We must pull away to the ground. That flock will come back. We frightened them."

Bump! came something against the boat, and we heard Mart's voice.

"Pokin' round in the dark like spoons! What have ye done! We've scared five ducks for ye."

"Then one of them is ours," declared Bruce. "I heard three splashes."

"We won't quarrel over it, Cap," said the old hunter, good-naturedly. "We've had mighty good luck, anyway. Now the fog's lifted. Look there!"

He pointed away to one side.

We were close to a low reed-fringed shore and the fog was rising every minute.

"Here's our ground," proclaimed old Mart, "and yonder's the blind. Comshore!"

(To be continued, commenced in No. 401.)

A "Lovers' Telegraph."

BY HENRI MONTCLAIR.

ONE Saturday evening, between ten and eleven o'clock, Fred Purple, assistant cashier of the Countdown National Bank, sat at his desk, busily engaged upon some bank work that must be finished before Sunday.

Every few minutes Fred would go through a series of motions that to any uninitiated observer would have appeared extremely unbecomingly and ridiculous. He would bring his lips into close proximity to a sort of metallic bowl that was fixed just before him on the desk, and with a perfectly serious voice and manner would say to it:

"I hope you are not getting sleepy, dear!"

And then, substituting his ear for his lips, he would listen intently for a reply that was certainly quite inaudible at any distance; and would then add, with a satisfied air:

"Well, don't get impatient, darling. I shall finish this job in fifteen minutes more."

The intelligent reader, who of course keeps pace with all the great discoveries and improvements of the times, will not fail to understand that this metallic bowl, with the assistant cashier in so endearing a manner was addressing, was one terminus of a *Telephonic*; and we hasten to explain that the companion "receiver" or mouth-piece was located some distance down the village street at the residence of the widow Farwell, whose daughter Jennie was Fred Purple's sweetheart.

Fred was an ingenious young man, and had early taken advantage of Professor Bell's wonderful invention to establish a means of communication between the bank and Mrs. Farwell's cottage, so that he could keep up a conversation with Jennie even when he was away from her.

It may be added, too, that the existence of this apparatus was known with the exception of the parties most directly interested, only to Mr. Jackson, the cashier. The board of directors would have held up its twelve hands in holy horror had they known of it. They were men of the "old fog" type, who regarded all modern improvements with a suspicious eye, and to be religiously avoided. Consequently they coldly voted down a motion once made by the cashier to have the bank connected with his house by a burglar alarm; they refused point-blank to have anything to do with telegraphs and telephones; and they even went so far as to turn twelve deaf ears to an enterprising lightning-rod man who wished to insure the bank against being struck by the electric fluid. Old-fashioned iron shutters on the windows, old-fashioned bolts and bars on the doors, and an old-fashioned safe for the money were good enough for them.

At a quarter before eleven Fred had just one more column of figures to add. He had gone ticklishly up the "units" row, and was already half way down the "tens" when he felt, all at once, a hand laid heavily upon his shoulder. Greatly startled, he looked around; and then he rubbed his eyes to assure himself that he was not asleep. There, near—rough, hard-looking fellows, he had never seen—stood behind his chair, one with a heavy bar of iron in his hand. Of course Fred knew in an instant what they were there for.

"You'll excuse us, young feller"—it was the man with the bar in his grasp who spoke—"for interruptin' yer. But we concluded yer wasn't goin' ter git through at all to-night, and we've got ter be some ways from here by mornin'!"

"What do you want?" Fred asked, with pardonable trepidation.

"We want the twenty thousand dollars that's in that safe."

"But the keys are not here. Jackson keeps them up at his house."

"We know that, well enough; but it won't take us long to open the safe with our own. Elf ye don't mind, we'll jest wind this bit of string around 'er a few times jest ter keep yer from squirmin'. It'll make it more binding, ye know."

"Oh, certainly," said Fred, in as pleasant a tone as he could command under the circumstances.

He knew very well that he could not help himself and he put the best face possible on the matter.

The "bit of string" was a clothes-line which had probably been taken from somebody's back yard near by. This the three men proceeded to wind about Fred's body and arms and legs, without moving him at all from the chair; and he, poor fellow, sat there, stupidly leaning on his elbows, and permitting himself, without a struggle, to be, as it were, done up in a net-work of rope. He tried to move presently but he could not.

"Char!" uttered the leader of the trio, at length. "Now, my friend, let's have a daylight understanding. We don't mean no harm to you; but ef yer raise a single squeak while we're goin' through at our job, Jennie here will stan' over yer with her bar—hell drive the cat through the top of yer head—clear down to yer collar-bone. Ar ye sarvey?"

Fred nodded ruefully. Yes, he understood very well, and he had not the remotest idea of doing anything to bring down upon himself so uncomfortable an infliction. He could see that they meant what they said.

So the leader, with one of the others, paying no more attention to Fred, set to work with the various implements of their trade to open the door of the safe, while "Jennies," a heavily-built and dangerous-looking but apparently not ill-natured person, remained beside the young man, with the bar of iron in his hand and his restless eyes wandering about the room, returning every few seconds to rest upon his prisoner.

The latter, as has been said, was tied down in just the position in which he had been sitting, with his arms on the desk and his chin in his hands. Moreover, though he did not yet realize

it, his mouth was within a few inches of the telephone, and he presently felt disposed to say something to the man behind him.

"This is a comfortable position for a man to be in," said he.

"Yer might be in a worse one," replied "Jennies," sympathetically.

And then, to Fred's sudden surprise and delight, from the mouth of the telephone, distinctly, yet so low that he himself barely caught the murmur of the words, came a sentence from Jennie Farwell.

"I am particularly comfortable for me, I can assure you. If you don't pay better attention, and talk to me once in a while, I shall go to bed."

A sudden idea flashed like lightning through Fred's brain. He did not seem to be in a condition to interfere with the robbery himself—one man against three, and he tied fast to his chair; but he could tell Jennie and she could go for assistance. So, almost instantly he went on in answer to "Jennies's" remark:

"Perhaps I might," said he. "I doubt it, though. Just think of it! Here—" he turned his head as he was speaking, and spoke the rest of his sentence directly into the telephone, without the slightest pause or change of tone—"here I am, tied fast to a telephone, with a man standing over me ready to knock me in the head if I utter a cry!"

"Praps then," Jennie philosophically suggested, "praps you'd better not utter it."

Fred scarcely heard the words, however. His eyes were at the telephone, and all his senses strained to catch a reply. None came, however. Jennie had not understood him, or, (more probably, was too much startled to answer immediately.)

"Do you hear what I am saying?"

Fred asked the question of the telephone; and he caught the feeble, trembling: "I hear. What shall I do?" that came back, before "Jennies's" gruff, base voice answered the same question, which he of course took to be intended for himself.

"Hear? Of course I hear. D'ye s'pose I've got cotton in my ears?"

"Well, then," Fred slowly went on, running over in his mind all the while how best to shape his sentence so as, without exciting suspicion, to convey to Jennie what he wished to say. "Do you know what I would do if I were out of this? I would," here he turned to the telephone again and delivered the rest of his sentence as before.

"I look like a bell or suthin'," he continued. "I hope you'd think, with me, that I'd step forward, interrupting myself. 'What is that thing yer talkin' inter?'"

He stooped over and peered into the telephone. Then again his eyes sought Fred's with an ugly expression.

"Is look like a bell or suthin'," he continued. "And then, with a fierce oath, 'Ef I thought yer was up ter anything overhanded with thet thar, I'd—'"

He finished his sentence by raising his weapon threateningly towards Fred.

Fred gave an uneasy little laugh.

"Poon!" said he. "You need not fret yourself about that. It is a bell, of course; but you're not such a fool, are you, as not to know it would ring if it rung at all?"

"Jennies" reflected a moment, and seeming at length satisfied that his suspicions were unfounded, he relaxed into his former silence.

Fred listened painfully for some word from Jennie; but if she answered at all it had been so faintly that he could not hear it.

There was nothing more to be done but sit quietly and await the progress of events. He could not doubt that the girl had understood him; and before this she was probably on her way to arouse Mr. Jackson. The cashier was a fearless and energetic man, and, once acquainted with the facts, he would lose no time in organizing a rescue.

It was nervous work for Fred Purple for the next fifteen minutes—tied and helpless, listening to the ticking of the calendar clock, the deep breathing of his guardian and the murmured conversation of the two other men as they worked steadily away upon the lock. At one moment, as he realized that any attack or interference on his part would result in his instant death, he almost wished he had made no effort to betray the presence of the robbers; and then, as he heard the leader congratulating himself that he should make even quicker work of the lock than he had thought, his lively fear was that Jackson would not appear in time.

At last, with an exclamation of satisfaction, the leader of the three gave a wrench to his instrument and threw open the door of the vault; and then Fred, who by turning his head could see the operations very conveniently, saw them take their gun and go inside. As for "Jennies," he still sat there, stolid and faithful, his eyes roving often about the room, always returning at short intervals to observe his charge.

Fred had latterly taken his seat on a high stool at Fred's side, and was so situated that his back was toward his two companions.

Hardly a minute seemed to have elapsed after the disappearance of the two burglars when the door of the vault opened, and joy he saw a gray head, which he recognized at once as Mr. Jackson's, appear around the corner of the vault and take a hasty survey of the apartment. So great was Fred's astonishment that he forgot to breathe, and he felt as if some sudden movement had been less firmly bound. But "Jennies," from where he sat, could not see the delight that only showed itself in Fred's eyes.

Fred waited breathlessly another minute. Jackson took a long look about him, and it was probably now in consultation with them.

Then once more a head appeared—this time the head of McPherson, the chief constable of the town—a powerful man, who now stepped forward and advanced himself toward the vault, as if by some sudden movement had been less firmly bound. But "Jennies," from where he sat, could not see the delight that only showed itself in Fred's eyes.

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At the last moment, Jennie Farwell appeared, trembling and tearful, followed timidly by Tommy Jackson. The first thing the girl did was to go and seize Fred's hand. And then, since she did not then and there dare kiss him and must kiss something, she walked straight up to the telephone and kissed that.

"I wonder what the Board will say now," Fred remarked to the cashier, as they were leaving the bank.

"I don't know what they'll say; but I know what they'll do. They will raise your salary."

And so they did; and Fred and Jennie were able to marry shortly after that—thanks to their "Lovers' Telegraph."

A SADDENED THOUGHT IN VESTING.

BY H. S. KELLER.

A little patch of heather brown,
A silver moon reclining,
A rolling slope of meadow's crown,
A nature's group combining;

A bro on wheel, a crumbling mill,
A silent pond and rushes,
A lone fence without a rail,
A stream no longer gushes;

A dying hope, a silent tomb
That safely holds in token,
A bended faith, a solemn gloom,
A loving heart that's broken;

A grassy mound, a slab of white,
A sleeping spirit resting;
A silvery moon, a pale starlight,
A saddened thought investing!

Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

THE CATCHING OF 1877.

SPLENDID work was accomplished in the catcher's position in the professional arena during 1877. Indeed, never before in the history of the game was such fine play behind the bat witnessed as during the past season. Never before had the average pace of the pitching been so swift or difficult to attend to as it was in 1877. Not only was the speed of the ball great, but the horizontal curve imparted to it made it very difficult to judge correctly, and it required the utmost activity at the hands of catchers to escape letting balls pass them.

Considering the speed and character of the delivery from the curved-line pitchers, the comparatively small number of passed balls recorded against catchers was quite a remarkable feature of the season's play. Hitherto players have received salaries more in accordance with an average reputation as players in the field and at the bat combined rather than for their special excellence as occupants of one regular home position in the field.

In this way it has frequently occurred that an out-fielder has received a higher salary than a catcher; witness the case of George Hall's \$2,800 a year against Clapp's \$2,000. The catcher's duties are now of such an onerous nature that he is placed him far ahead of any out-fielder in the value of his services. Indeed, the catcher and pitcher of a professional team are entitled to a third more salary than any out-fielder receives, and a fourth more than any others of the in-field players, except the one who acts as captain of the team. In other words, if a catcher receives \$1,500 for a season's service, a base-player should not receive over \$1,200, and an out-fielder not more than \$900.

Just as fine play—better play in one instance—was exhibited by catchers of outside club teams as was shown by the catchers of the League nine. The latter included Allison, Snyder, Brown, Clapp, Harbridge, McVey, Anson, Dorgan, Hicks, Hastings, and Miller, the four first named taking the lead. White only played six games in three games, he occupying first base in 1877. Outside the League arena were Flint, Higham, Powers and Hotaling as the leading catchers whom we saw play. Allison played a masterly game behind the bat when in good physical trim for his work. In fact, in close play he cannot be beat, especially in capturing low balls to the left of the batsman. He is not quick enough in returning to the pitcher, however, in which respect Clapp excels. This is an important point in the catcher's position. In other words, six chances for high foul-ball catches or long foul-ball tips are offered where one is presented sharp from the bat. This is the general rule. To play up behind the bat, therefore, when there is no base-runner behind the bat, is a loss of chances for long foul tips or high foul balls back of home base. We see nothing that can be gained by it except an opportunity to show the catcher's skill in close play, and he gets plenty of opportunities of this kind when base-runners are in position.

Snyder did some wonderful play behind the bat in September in supporting Devlin's swift pitching; and Brown's play in facing Bond's difficult delivery was excellent. But the best average catching of the season was that done by Flint of the Indianapolis nine, on whose splendid catching half of Nolan's pitching reputation was built. The weakest catching display in League club teams was that of McVey, whose failure to give Bradley the requisite support, led to the loss of the championship by the Chicago team.

A drawback to the creditable work in the catcher's position in 1877 was the growing and grumbling at umpires' decisions, and the habit of "chinning" generally, which was indulged in by McVey, Anson, Higham and that class of growing players. If not put a stop to by club managers it will result in the clubs finding it impossible to get a competent gentleman to occupy the umpire's position in 1878. Umpires have an onerous duty to attend to, and a most unpleasant task under the best of circumstances, but with growing catchers to annoy them with insulting questioning of the impartiality of their decisions, and confusing them in judging of points of play, the disagreeable nature of their duty is doubled.

The League Association held its second annual convention from Dec. 5th to the 7th at Cleveland, and take the work done as a whole it was more to the interests of the professional class than of any previous meeting of the Association. They had some very important matters brought before them, to which due consideration was given, and they seem to have acted with the purpose of purifying the professional atmosphere which was decidedly foul last season. What with their prompt endorsement of the action of the Louisville club in punishing its knavish players; their wisdom in refraining from any radical changes in the playing rules; their effort to get rid of the abuses connected with the umpires of the game, and their agreeing not to engage or even negotiate for the services of players for an ensuing season unless the existing season has nearly expired, they have certainly accomplished better work for the interests of the professional class than at either of their previous conventions.

One of the most difficult problems they had to solve was that involving the question of

improving the position of the umpire in the game. Last season the evils connected with the umpiring in professional base-ball contests culminated in a condition of things which threatened the very life of the National Game. That Umpire Tree of all sports, the Foot-room, had spread its roots to the very center of the ball-field; and its poisonous influence had reached the judges of the contests to such an extent as to open the door to that most fatal of abuses connected with the game, the bribery of the umpires. This result was largely due to two most maligned influences, the one being the growth of the evil of the abuse of umpires by players, while the other was the still worse influence of the gambling indulged in by club directors and stockholders. These two things combined to produce a state of demoralization in the professional arena in 1877 unprecedented in the history of their existence as a class. This was the all-important difficulty the League had to encounter, and how to legislate to improve matters was unquestionably a difficult task. Of course whatever was done in the way of new rules and laws applicable to umpires and umpiring, had to be more or less of an experiment, inasmuch as the existing condition of affairs was unprecedented. After considerable discussion of the matter and due consideration of the several suggestions offered, the convention concluded its action on the subject by adopting a plan which, on its face, scarcely seems likely to succeed, and yet it may turn out to be just the thing wanted.

The new rules in question are, in brief, as follows:

"Any two clubs may agree on any person for umpire for any game or number of games. If no agreement is reached the visiting club shall, five days before the game, select five names from a staff of league umpires, and from this five the home club shall select one, and shall be charged with producing him on the ground. If the home club fails then the visiting club may select an umpire. If the visiting club fails to send in the names, then the home club may select an umpire. The staff of league umpires shall be three times as many in number as clubs in the league. Every club shall nominate as many men as it believes to be good umpires, and send them to the league office. All clubs shall select a proper number from the combined lists."

This much for the preliminary rule governing the choice of umpires. The new move made by the League in respect to the umpire is as follows. Quite an arbitrary supervision of the field has been given to the umpire; his jurisdiction having been largely extended and his powers enlarged makes him master of the grounds for the whole of the game, and requires him to keep both teams at work, and to keep the players of the batting side in their proper positions. It also commands him to compel any player to do any act, to carry out the spirit as well as the letter of the rules. He may fine players from \$10 to \$30 in case of disobedience or insolence.

This new move may be regarded in the light of a coup d'etat, and as such it may result in greater evils than the one it is calculated to remove. Still something had to be done to induce a better class of men to enter upon the duties, and anything to be effective had to be new and somewhat startling. Next season's experience will show whether it was politic or not. If it gets rid of the nuisance of abuse of umpires by players, and their continuous displaying of decisions, it will have done good work, if nothing else is gained by it. We find the subject of the work of the convention fruitful enough for another article.

Ripples.

If your overcoat hasn't been worn out more than a half-dozen times it will do to wear again this winter.

"Moral" forces is never lost," observes a contemporary. The same can be said of a broken-bladed pocket-knife.

START your fire with coal-oil, drag your gun through the crack of a fence, muzzle foremost, do something to cause a sensation.

THE proprietor of a hotel at